

**INDIA'S NAVAL SUPPORT TO SRI LANKA AND THE  
MALDIVES**

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**DECLARATION**

I declare that the dissertation entitled “**INDIA’S NAVAL SUPPORT TO SRI LANKA AND THE MALDIVES**” submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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*Dedicated to*  
*AMMA and ABBA*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APC	Armoured Personnel Carriers
BIOT	British Indian Ocean Territory
CENTO	Central Treaty Organisation
CGS	Coast Guard Ship
CP	Communist Party
DMK	Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
GRSE	Garden Reach Shipbuilding and Engineering
GSL	Goa Shipyard Limited
HDL	Hooghly Docking Limited
HQ	Head Quarter
IMSF	Indian Marine Special Force
INLT	Indian Naval Liaison Teams
INS	Indian Naval Ship
IPKF	Indian Peace-Keeping Force
JVP	Janatha Vimukti Paramuna
LSSP	Lanka Sama Samaja Pakshaya
LST-L	Large Landing Ship Tank
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MARCOS	Marine Commandos
MDL	Mazagon Docks Limited
MR	Maritime Reconnaissance
NSS	National Security Service
PLOTE	People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam
QRF	Quick Reaction Force
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SLAF	Sri Lankan Armed Forces
SLBM	Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile.
SLFP	Sri Lanka Freedom Party
UK	United Kingdom



UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VOA	Voice of America
YSF	Young Socialist Front

## PREFACE

A country's interactions with other nations are determined by its foreign policy. If the instruments of nation's foreign policy are wisely chosen and skillfully applied, the direct application of military force is seldom required. Navies worldwide, unlike the armies and the air forces, are ideally suited to support the foreign policy objectives of the country. Navies offer a wide range of diplomatic instruments for use in peacetime, in times of strain and during crisis.

Keeping in mind the considerable national interest of the country and the prevailing environment in the Indian Ocean Region, the Indian Navy is involved in political and diplomatic functions. The first major role of the Indian Navy within the higher spectrum of political action took place in 1971 during the JVP insurgency in Sri Lanka. The next political role of the Indian Navy took place after the signing of an accord between India and Sri Lanka on 29 July 1987. Another important political role was undertaken by the navy in 1988 when Maldives faced a security challenge following a coup attempt to overthrow President Gayoom. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the biggest humanitarian assistance was provided by the Indian Navy in the aftermath of the tsunami in 2004.

Now the question arises why India provided naval support and cooperation to its two smaller neighbors- Sri Lanka and the Maldives during the period of both security challenge and natural disaster. The study would make a critical enquiry into the political and security compulsions behind India's decision.

The main objectives of this study are:

1. to analyse the nature of Indian naval assistance and support to Sri Lanka and the Maldives,
2. to examine India's motives and objectives in extending naval assistance and support to Sri Lanka and the Maldives both during security challenge and natural disaster,

3. to find out the implications of India's naval support to Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

The dissertation is divided into the following five chapters:

**Chapter 1: Political Role of Navy: A Conceptual Framework.** The main purpose of this chapter is to provide a theoretical framework of the study. Here an attempt has been made to analyse why the countries use their navy to achieve their political or foreign policy goals.

**Chapter 2: Indian Navy and India's Regional Security Policy.** The chapter discusses India's regional security policy both during the cold war and in the post cold war periods and the role of navy in implementing the country's security policy.

**Chapter 3: Indian Naval Assistance during Security Challenge.** This chapter analyses India's naval support to Sri Lanka and the Maldives in times of security challenge. The chapter critically examines various operations undertaken by the Indian Navy in both these countries to tide over the security challenge and impact of such operations.

**Chapter 4: India's Humanitarian Naval Assistance.** This chapter analyses India's naval support to Sri Lanka and the Maldives in the aftermath of disastrous tsunami in 2004.

**Chapter 5:** The concluding chapter seeks to answer various questions such as- the rationale behind India's naval support to both countries and how far Indian Navy has been successful in achieving country's foreign policy goal.

The study has adopted historical and analytical method. For this purpose, both primary as well as secondary sources have been consulted. The primary source include Lok Sabha Debates, Annual Reports of the Ministry of External Affairs, India and Ministry of Defence, India, Speeches and Statements of Government officials, and the secondary sources include books, published articles, Encyclopedia, Asia Yearbook (1987), reports of governmental and non-governmental organizations.

This dissertation is my own work and I am solely responsible for any mistake in the dissertation.

# *Chapter 1*

## **POLITICAL ROLE OF NAVY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Every country has got its own armed forces to look after its security. They are basically assigned to military functions. However, Navy, one of the branches of a country's armed services, is used for political purposes too. The political function of navy is a recent development. According to Booth it came into vogue in the 1960s and the 1970s.<sup>1</sup>

Traditionally military function has been the fundamental role of navy. US Naval strategist A.T. Mahan wrote in detail about this. A.T. Mahan expounded that dominance at sea, from the historical perspective, is very important since it has always accrued prosperity and power to a nation.<sup>2</sup> He argued that sea power, comprising a powerful fleet to acquire colonies and secure markets, and a strong commerce will lead to increased wealth, national strength, and consequently, increased capacity to house a larger population.<sup>3</sup> In other words navy's military function is nothing but gaining dominance at sea. The traditional role of navy is to defend the seaboard of the country against enemy incursions in the form of bombardments, the landing of hostile elements of forces, clandestine attacks on its harbours, ports and naval bases and the mining of their approaches or of other focal areas of trade and sea passage<sup>4</sup>. For this purpose navy tries to gain access to and operate in the littoral regions of potential adversaries to detect and neutralise enemy sea mines and submarines and to protect themselves against cruise missiles and other anti ship weapons. To perform this military function effectively, navy must have surveillance forces, ocean going forces, harbour defence forces, amphibious forces capability and special action groups and air elements, which will be well integrated with the forces. Moreover offensive action to be prosecuted vigorously and relentlessly also requires the use of firm and secure bases as springboards for action.<sup>5</sup> The military function of navy is basically a war time function. The military function has a political

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<sup>1</sup> B.M. Dimri, "Naval Diplomacy & UNCLOS III", *Strategic Analysis* (New Delhi), vol.17, no.1, April 1994, P.56.

<sup>2</sup> As Quoted in Tan Wee Ngee, "Maritime Strategy in the Post Cold War Era", *Pointer* (Singapore), vol.26, no.1, Jan-Mar 2000, [http://www.mindef.gov.sg/safti/pointer/back/journals/2000/vol26no1/26\\_1/6.htm](http://www.mindef.gov.sg/safti/pointer/back/journals/2000/vol26no1/26_1/6.htm).

<sup>3</sup> As interpreted in A Philip Crowl, "Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian" in Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (New Jersey, 1994), p. 451.

<sup>4</sup> S.N. Kohli, *Sea Power and the Indian Ocean with Special Reference to India* (New Delhi, 1978), p.29.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.109.

dimension too which is called peacetime function or political function of navy. The functions of navies in peacetime are to provide visible signals of national intent in support of diplomatic intercourse.

### **1.1 Political Role of Navy**

The political or diplomatic role of the navy is concerned with the management of foreign policy short of the actual employment of force. It is also termed as naval diplomacy. Naval diplomacy means the use of 'sea power' in furtherance of diplomatic and political objectives of a country. It involves, creating a favourable general and military image abroad, establishing one's right in areas of interest, providing reassurance to allies and friendly regimes, influencing behaviour of other governments, threatening sea borne interdiction and finally threatening intervention.<sup>6</sup> Naval diplomacy can be defined as "(t)he employment of naval power directly in the service of foreign policy. Like all forms of diplomacy it is intended to influence the thoughts and actions of foreign decisions makers. It can be practiced in cooperative ways - by employing naval forces to make goodwill port visits or to furnish humanitarian or technical assistance. But it has been of far greater consequence (though less frequently encountered) in its coercive forms, when naval forces are used to threat or impose violent sanctions".<sup>7</sup>

It signifies that the use of navy (warship in particular) to effectuate one's foreign policy objective in a manner short of resorting to force.<sup>8</sup> In other words it is a process whereby navy seeks to evoke the desired result without use of actual force.<sup>9</sup> James Cable defines it as "the use or threat of limited naval force, otherwise than as an act of war, in order to secure advantage or to avert loss, either in furtherance of an international dispute or else against foreign nationals within the territory or the jurisdiction of their own

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<sup>6</sup> Defence note on "The Role of Navy in Peace Time", <http://www.defencejournal.com/2000/oct/role-navy.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> B. Dismukes & JN McConnell, *Soviet naval Diplomacy* (New York, 1979), p.xiii.

<sup>8</sup> Ken Booth, *Law, Force and Diplomacy at Sea* (London, 1985), p.138.

<sup>9</sup> Dimri, n.1, P.56.

state.”<sup>10</sup> The diplomatic application supports state policy in particular bargaining situations or in general international intercourse.

Now the navy has been assigned to perform this political or diplomatic role mainly because of the unique characteristic that it possesses. It has got a unique ability to influence the geopolitical equation without actually involving itself in hostilities. According to China’s Vice Admiral Chen Mingshem, “(t)he navy... whether (in) peace or war... is also a means of pursuing national foreign policy. Navy possesses many specific characteristics that differ from those of the other armed forces. The navy has international capabilities of free navigation on the high seas and in the peacetime it can cruise the world’s seas, even conducting limited operations, outside the territorial waters of hostile countries.”<sup>11</sup> According to United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), naval vessels have the right to innocent passage through high seas and even inside territorial waters. Free navigation in the high seas and the territorial waters gives naval forces flexibility and distinct advantages over the other two armed forces as neither the army nor the air force can cross into the territory of another state without authorisation. There are many different types of warships, and many of them being multipurpose are individually very versatile. Because of this, a ship can be used as a political signal and can easily be altered to suit the circumstances; the range of its weaponry provides a whole variety of diplomatic instruments.<sup>12</sup> Naval forces are considered to be less provocative, less dangerous and more controllable than that of the army and air force.<sup>13</sup> Their use is controllable because of ease of deployment and withdrawal. Marine forces bring to the calculus the ability to introduce quickly ground forces, forcibly if required. These same forces can be quickly withdrawn if required and are important elements in "rescuing" people of friendly nations. The ability to influence from off-shore also provides an important advantage in that, should withdrawal be required, it can be done with much less fanfare and virtually no impact on the local

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<sup>10</sup> James Cable, *Gunboat Diplomacy: 1919-1991* (London, 1994), p.14.

<sup>11</sup> As quoted in Geoffrey Till, *Sea Power: A Guide for the Twenty First Century* (London, 2004), p.275.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.280.

<sup>13</sup> Geoffrey Till, *Modern Sea Power* (London, 1987), p.169.



populace.<sup>14</sup> Since a naval task force is stand-alone unit, it can act independently. Naval forces are more mobile than the base dependent air force or army, which are dependent on the sea. Warships can, with supporting auxiliaries, loiter in likely areas for weeks and sometimes months at a time.<sup>15</sup> Warships, besides having their own armaments, possess capabilities to carry troops, tanks, aircraft, etc. to a distant coast. Thus, it can be used for projection of power from sea by means of war fighting capability and also the projection of political influence through the presence of naval power off shore.<sup>16</sup> Presence of warships also symbolises the naval power of a country. Due to these unique characteristics navy is capable of furthering countries interest without any hostility or without resorting to power.

More over, Geoffrey Till has argued that the navy and politics has a complicated relationship and therefore political function has been declared and justified as an important function of navies. In his words:

Several points about the complicated relationship between naval power and politics should be made. First, maritime operations in peace and war can develop their own momentum, producing their own imperatives and unintended political consequences...(s)econd, the influence arrows between a navy and its environment go both ways; navies do have a political impact on their environment, but they are affected by it too. Navies themselves...are often a consequence (rather than a course) of political process either on the domestic or the international scene.<sup>17</sup>

Similarly, Mahan also observed: “(d)iplomatic conditions affect military action and military considerations diplomatic measures”.<sup>18</sup> It connotes that navy themselves, their size and use, are often a consequence or cause of political processes either on the domestic or the international scene. Due to all these factors navy can use its warships as instruments of foreign policy of a country without resorting to war. According to Geoffrey Till political role of navy is increasing partly because of a consequence of the growth of strategic interest in littoral and the increasing value of the ocean and partly

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<sup>14</sup> Charles D. Allen, Jr., *The Uses of Navies in Peacetime* (Washington D.C., 1980), p.15.

<sup>15</sup> Till, n.11, p.280.

<sup>16</sup> North & Oliver, *The Future of United States Naval Power* (Bloomington, 1979), p.41.

<sup>17</sup> Till, n.11, p.275.

<sup>18</sup> As quoted by Geoffrey Till in *Ibid.*

through a growing acceptance of the need in today's globalised world to manage crises and to prevent limit or resolve conflict. The growing utility of navies is also a consequence of the fundamental characteristics of naval forces themselves.<sup>19</sup>

Political function of navy is carried out by naval presence in the area where a country has certain interest. It offers governments a wide range of policy options, such as picture building, coercion and coalition building etc. which they may choose to exploit in order to defend national interests around the world. Demonstrative actions by the navy in many cases have made it possible to achieve political ends without resorting to armed struggle, merely by putting on pressure with one's own potential might and threatening to start military operations. Thus the navy has always been an instrument of the policy of states and an important aid to diplomacy in peacetime. Before carrying out any naval presence mission government tries to identify the importance of national interests in particular regions and some kind of assessment of the likelihood that those interests might be jeopardised. If a country feels that its interests are at stake, it tries to safeguard that interest by deploying warships in that area. According to Turner, there are two intentions behind these kinds of deployment. First is called "preventive deployments" - where the appearance of naval forces prevents a problem from becoming a crisis and the second one is "reactive deployments" where naval forces respond to a crisis. Deployments, preventive or reactive, should be appropriate to a situation and should pose a credible threat to the opposition.<sup>20</sup> Naval presence mission can be routine and continuous or periodic depending upon the interests of the country in that particular area. It exists as part of a country's maritime policy, whose objective is to attempt to use the sea for one's own purposes while being in a position to prevent others from using it in ways which are to one's disadvantage. According to James Cable, on the other hand "warships are moved or deployed as a political gesture, as an alternative to effective action or an outlet for emotion", but often it will be precautionary "just in case" insurance against the unforeseeable.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Till, n.11, p.274.

<sup>20</sup> As quoted by Geoffrey Till in *Ibid.*, p.272.

<sup>21</sup> As quoted by Geoffrey Till in *Ibid.*, p.279.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Political Role of the Navy**

It is very important for a country to exert influence and power in multitudinous places and situations in which interests are at stake in varying degrees, so as to secure outcomes beneficial to that country. But that projection of power and influence has to be done without resorting to war as it is said: to subdue the enemy without fighting, that is the acme of skill. Navy can be used to exert pressure and influence without resorting to war since it has the advantage of innocent passage in the high seas and territorial water. Thus naval diplomacy is perceived with two perspectives i.e. Exercise of power and exercise of influence.

### **1.2.1 Exercise of Power**

Countries use navy to exercise power without resorting to war. It is called gunboat diplomacy or naval coercion. Naval coercion is used to influence the behaviour of other people and to get them to do what one wants them to do by means short of full-scale war. Coercion comprises two closely related dimensions: deterrence and compellence. Acts of deterrence are aimed at preventing someone from doing something by creating an expectation that the likely costs of the act would exceed the likely benefits. Deterrence is a matter of intentions and perceptions tends to be passive rather than active, general rather than specific and in itself will not have lethal consequences even for the deterred party. Compellence, on the other hand, may or may not have lethal consequences; it is specific, active and is intended to oblige an adversary to do something, or may be to stop doing something.<sup>22</sup> James Cable has classified gunboat diplomacy into four political categories - definitive force, purposeful force, catalytic force and expressive force.<sup>23</sup>

Gunboat diplomacy tries to create a situation in which the victim has no choice but to agree to an escalation or submit with meek acquiescence. Main aim of this kind of gunboat diplomacy is to induce the victim to take some action or to prevent him from

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p.286.

<sup>23</sup> James Cable, "Gunboat Diplomacy", in *International Military and Defence Encyclopedia* (Washington, 1993), vol.3, p.1132.

doing so or to restrain him from even starting it. It is felt that something is going to happen, that might be prevented if force were available at the critical point. There may be a crisis and the government with a naval force may believe that the presence of a naval fleet would prevent the crisis. Warships are also employed to emphasise attitudes or to provide an emotional outlet. Eric Grove states: “(t)he fundamental fact of 20<sup>th</sup> century seapower is that a country’s naval capability is a direct reflection of its sheer economic power in all senses and that power inevitably reflects its control and exploitation of large land masses”<sup>24</sup>

Exercising power through naval presence is very important as it shows the strength of a country at sea. According to Geoffrey Till, being weak at sea put you in political and strategic danger both at home and abroad.<sup>25</sup> This danger will not only emanate from military front but also from naval coercion or gunboat diplomacy.

It is important to mention here that limited naval force is basically a political concept. The threat of force does not cease to be limited in nature either due to the size or characteristics of the ships involved or due to the supplementary actions such as landing of troops or shore bombardment.<sup>26</sup> In gunboat diplomacy no category of actions can be labeled as a safe threshold - that will restrain the affected adversary from escalation to war levels. In fact the acceptance of all concerned parties of an act of force as limited rather than an act of war is independent of objective, motive, valid criterion, morals or international law - only the result matters.<sup>27</sup> However, gunboat diplomacy is definitely an instrument to be used in peacetime or less than peacetime scenarios. Occasions during which gunboat diplomacy has steadily escalated to war have proved the failure of this type of coercive diplomacy in its conventional sense since the aim is to achieve the objective with mere threat or precise and limited use of naval forces. Its culmination in a state of war implies the failure of diplomacy.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Eric Grove, *The Future of Sea Power* (London, 1990), p.4.

<sup>25</sup> Till, n.11, p.271.

<sup>26</sup> P.K. Ghosh, “Revisiting Gunboat Diplomacy: An Instrument of Threat or Use of Limited Naval Force”, *Strategic Analysis* (New Delhi), vol.24, no.11, Feb.2001, p.2007.

<sup>27</sup> Cable, n.24, P.1133.

<sup>28</sup> Ghosh, n.27, p.2009.

### **1.2.2 Exercise of Influence**

A navy brings to the diplomatic process its unique ability to assert influence. Navy's presence mission can be expected to support allies, influence neutrals, deter potential enemies, protect friendly interests, and support a maritime nation's interests with respect to international law and convention and these preventive mechanisms provide a stabilising influence. Navy tries to secure foreign policy objectives not by threatening potential adversaries but by influencing the behaviour of allies and potentially friendly by-standers. Behaviour of allies can be influenced through naval aid, operational calls, port calls and specific goodwill visits. Naval aid varies from sale or gift of warships, help in training and arms supply, and assistance in security challenges or during natural disaster or other maritime activities. There are various objectives of such naval aid to foster goodwill; to demonstrate an ideology; to impress or deter by demonstrating power; to support the activities of economic power etc. In other words warships can be important influence on various aspects of policies. In Ken Booth's words:

Navies do not simply execute foreign policy. In international politics, as in life in general, the interrelationships are complicated between instruments and policies, means and ends. The simple image of the functional relationship between the foreign policy purpose and the naval instrument is too clinical, too ideal. In addition to providing capabilities for the fulfillment of goals set by a political authority, warships can also be important influence on policies or aspect of policies. By the way in which they are used or by their very existence, warships can affect the foreign policy aims or routines of particular states; they can create or modify situation and expectation and thus policies.<sup>29</sup>

Thus the navy tries to achieve its foreign policy objectives by exercising power and influence. Navy can perform its political role through abovementioned means i.e. naval presence, coercive actions, naval assistance, naval aid etc. In different circumstances different means are used to achieve desired results. The scope of this dissertation permits to discuss only two of such circumstances or situations viz. political role of navy during security challenge and natural disaster.

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<sup>29</sup> K. Booth, *Navies and Foreign Policy* (London, 1977), p.85.

### **1.3 Political Role of Navy in Tackling the Security Challenge**

National security means the ability of a nation to protect its territorial integrity against external threat or attack, to preserve the constitutional or political order that it has given to itself, to maintain and further economic system, protect and promote its internal values or legitimate interest. These elements of security get threatened or challenged by external or internal entity. Challenge from internal factor is increasing day by day. The inability of the state to satisfy the rising aspirations of large sections and groups of people who have over many years remained at the margin of development processes precipitates turmoil and instability. Militant assertion of these groups poses a serious challenge to nation's sovereignty. There are various factors, such as religious fundamentalism, secessionism, narco-terrorism, insurgency, etc. which pose challenge to nation's security and territorial integrity and sovereignty of nations.

During the period of security challenge a third country can use its naval diplomacy in favour of the victim country. The mere existence of a capable naval force in an area of concern may represent an unarticulated threat to possible malefactors of the consequences of wrong doing.<sup>30</sup> Thus presence of warships deters adversary moves and threatens the adversaries that any act against legitimate government would result combat action against the adversaries. Presence of warships poses a credible threat to the target group and prevents a problem from becoming a crisis. However, protecting a legitimate government is not the only reason for which a country uses naval coercion.

During security crisis a country through its naval assistance to the victim country tries to achieve its political objective. In such case naval assistance is intended to compel the victim to do something it does not want to do otherwise.<sup>31</sup>

Naval assistance during security crisis on the one hand, earns praises from the victim for protecting them, on the other, achieves its desired objectives by compelling the

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<sup>30</sup> Till, n.11, p.292.

<sup>31</sup> Till, n.11, p.288.

victim to submit with meek acquiescence and to induce to take some action in its favour or to prevent him from doing anything which goes against its interest.

In short naval assistance during security challenge brings to a country prestige, influence and power.

#### **1.4 Role of Navy during Natural Disaster**

During natural disaster navy plays important role. It saves lives, supplies foods, water sanitation, provides shelter, health services and other items of assistance. It is undertaken for the benefit of affected people and to facilitate the return to normal lives and livelihoods. It is called humanitarian assistance of navy. It is also termed as operation other than war which is basically a political role. Therefore, it is quite obvious that there must be some intention behind naval assistance during security challenge. According to norms humanitarian action should be guided by the humanitarian principles of humanity, meaning the centrality of saving human lives and alleviating suffering wherever it is found. It should also be free from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.<sup>32</sup> Without any doubt, humanitarian principle is the primary and immediate concern of a country during natural disaster; but it is important to go beyond this moral factor to understand the intention of naval assistance during natural disaster. For the efficacy of naval assistance enough resources and capabilities (warships, amphibious ships) are required. With the humanitarian assistance, country exerts influence on the victims of natural disaster by providing help and assistance in hour of need and projects its power and capability through presence of warships to the world community.

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<sup>32</sup> "Meeting Conclusions", *International Meeting on Good Humanitarian donorship, Stockholm, 16-17 June 2003*, [www.reliefweb.int/ghd/imgd.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/ghd/imgd.pdf).

## 1.5 Conclusion

According to Booth the size of naval strength is not proportional to the amount of diplomatic influence it exerts. However certain prerequisites are important for navy to play its political role properly. Those prerequisites are: an accurate picture building, offensive and defensive power force tailored to the circumstances, a speedy response, controllability, a comfortable media, versatility in the individual platform, defence and offence cost and capability, single and group deployments prepared personnel and last but not the least war fighting excellencies of the navy. The careful management of these capabilities offers political leaders the opportunity to tailor the national response with an unequalled degree of precision.

In the present-day era when the costs of all types of war have increased considerably, the warship as an instrument of political influence has acquired much significance. Presence of warships have made it possible to achieve political ends without resorting to armed struggle, merely by putting on pressure with one's own potential might and threatening to start military operations. Ken Booth in his book *Law, Force & Diplomacy at Sea* has mentioned about the importance of warships as follows:

At this special stage in the history of international politics ...many members of the international community recognise that they have a greater stake in maritime developments than ever before; a tactical setting is evolving which offers new opportunities for naval diplomacy as a result of the proliferation of new psycho-legal frontiers; there is a continuing and modernizing set of relevant naval capabilities; and we face the prospect of a fragile international order in which there will be many occasions for both regional and extra regional powers to try to intrude their military power into a local trouble spot. The use of warships to support foreign policy is therefore here to stay. The optimum national policy for the sea which emerges from this would be one which includes a foreign policy which seeks to strengthen the structure of international society, and a military posture which should meet with restraint the violence which occasionally erupts...<sup>33</sup>

However, the biggest disadvantage with navy's diplomatic role is that the intended result is not always controlled. Since successful naval diplomacy depends on the perception of others, it becomes, at times difficult to control their perceptions. It may also

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<sup>33</sup> Booth, n.8, p.215.



turn out that that the victim state may not have perceived a signal in the perspective in which an aggressive state wants it to be visualised. Moreover, naval influence on politics does not work in isolation. A Country's overall foreign policy towards the other country also plays a decisive role in this direction.<sup>34</sup> A successful naval diplomacy depends not only on the ships at sea, but also on the skill of the country's diplomats.

It is obvious from the aforesaid discussion that countries use navy to further their political interest without resorting to war. India has also seen using its navy during peacetime situation in foreign countries. For example Indian navy was used during security challenges and humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka and Maldives. An attempt has been made in this study to discuss why India provided its naval assistance to Sri Lanka and Maldives during security challenges and humanitarian crisis.

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<sup>34</sup> Dimri, n.1, p.65.

## *Chapter 2*

## **INDIAN NAVY AND INDIA'S REGIONAL SECURITY POLICY**

*"...(N)avies do have a political impact on their environment, but they are affected by it too. Navies themselves...are often a consequence (rather than a course) of political process either on the domestic or the international scene." - Geoffrey Till.*

The growth and development of Indian Navy is the consequence of various domestic and international political processes. In fact the origin of Indian Navy lay amidst the rivalries of European colonial powers.<sup>1</sup> The growth and importance of navy have never been same all throughout. Regional and domestic security policy has a great impact on the growth of Indian Navy. In the initial years of India's independence, its security concern came from land frontiers. Therefore navy had a very limited role and got a low priority in the defence budget. However with the increasing superpower naval presence in the Indian Ocean, India perceived threat from the sea too. Consequently navy assumed importance and had undergone a modernisation programme. The post cold war period witnessed a shift in India's regional security policy, in which Indian Navy has got a far greater role.

An attempt has been made in this chapter to discuss India's regional security policy, both in the cold war and post cold war period, and the role of navy in realisation of the policy.

### **2.1 India's Regional Security Policy in the Cold War Period**

India's independence came at a time when the entire world was divided into two power blocs-Western bloc led by the US and Soviet bloc led by the USSR. Both the blocs keenly contested for military supremacy and fought proxy wars by adopting measures like arms proliferation, establishment of client states and bases throughout the world, particularly near sensitive regions and those expected to be of maximum use in case a direct war erupts between them.<sup>2</sup> Through the alliance politics both the superpowers tried

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<sup>1</sup> Rahul Roy-Chaudhury, *Sea Power and Indian Security* (London, 1995), p.16.

<sup>2</sup> Anita Bhatt, *The Strategic Role of Indian Ocean in World Politics* (Delhi, 1992), p.1.

to expand their political influence. India did not want to fall into the trap of cold war politics as India's main concerns during this period were to consolidate its territorial integrity and nation building. India did not want to concern itself with other's troubles, and was content with taking a vocal and diplomatic stand on issues of colonialism and the practice of racial discrimination.<sup>3</sup> Realising the impact of the cold war politics, India, after 200 years of foreign rule, was looking forward to an independent foreign policy and peaceful reconstruction to meet the enormous needs of its hungry millions, decided to keep itself away from the cold war alliance system and declared the policy of non-alignment. Nehru firmly believed that India's size, geo-strategic location and historical traditions entitled her to a leading role in Asian and world affairs. To retain its influence and to play a meaningful role in world peace India must follow an independent foreign policy.<sup>4</sup> He said before the constituent assembly on 8 March 1948:

If by any chance we align ourselves with one power group, we may perhaps from one point of view do some good, but I have not the shadow of doubt that from a larger point of view, not only of India but of world peace, it will do harm...I feel that India can play a big part and perhaps an effective part in helping to avoid war. Therefore, it becomes all the more necessary that India should not be lined up with any group of powers...<sup>5</sup>

After independence India had an underdeveloped economy. It had to depend on the foreign aid. It was therefore thought at that time that the nonaligned policy would widen India's source of economic aid. India retained a central and strategic position on one of the world's most important main trade routes, i.e. between Europe and the Far-East via the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. Since most of India's own trade is sea borne and carried on through this route, the constant availability of this route to Indian trade and shipping is a matter of vital importance to India.<sup>6</sup> Therefore it is important for India to be friendly with the powers that has the capability to disrupt the trade route.

India anticipated that the end of colonialism and the emergence of independent states in Asia and Africa would not end the desire of the former imperial and colonial

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<sup>3</sup> J.C. Kundra, *Indian Foreign Policy* (Netherlands, 1955), p.100.

<sup>4</sup> P.S. Jayaramu, *India's National Security and Foreign Policy* (New Delhi, 1987), pp.11-14.

<sup>5</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *Speeches, vol.I, September 1946 to May 1949* (New Delhi, 1958), edn 2, p. 249.

<sup>6</sup> Kundra, n.3, p.5.

powers to retain influence over their former colonies in order to meet their long term strategic and economic interests. India therefore initiated moves to unite newly independent countries on matters of common concern so as to ensure that they retained their freedom of option to take decisions on domestic, foreign and defence policies, to the extent possible, without being influenced by world powers or extraneous pressures.<sup>7</sup> One of the important regional policies of India was therefore to keep the great powers out of Asia. “The special relationships India had inherited from the British with regard to the security of some of the smaller neighbours reinforced the sense of South Asia as India’s sphere of influence”.<sup>8</sup> India thus expounded the policy of keeping foreign powers out of the region in the line of Monroe Doctrine that the US proclaimed for the Western hemisphere in the nineteenth century. India’s Monroe Doctrine was buttressed by the principle of bilateralism according to which the problems in the region must be solved bilaterally without letting external powers to play any role in the region. As the largest country of the region India assumed the role of the security provider to the smaller nations and their regimes.<sup>9</sup> However India could not keep the region free from super power influence and intervention for long. Very soon the two super powers established a number of strategic bases to expand their political influence and enhanced their naval capability in the Indian Ocean and thus threatened the regional security interest of India.

## **2.2 Super Power Naval Rivalry in the Indian Ocean Area**

During the first few years of the cold war the Indian Ocean Region was a low priority area from the point of view of super power global strategy. However from 1960 onwards there was certain change in super power strategy and the super powers, particularly the United States started pursuing an active Indian Ocean policy. The importance of area increased with the introduction of new weapon system based upon the SLBM (Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile) since 1962, as Indian Ocean is situated to the West of China and South of Russia’s soft belly. Hence for the United States this ocean is an ideal area

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<sup>7</sup> J.N. Dixit, *India’s Foreign Policy: 1947-2003* (New Delhi, 2003), pp.36-37.

<sup>8</sup> C. Raja Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon* (New Delhi, 2003), p.239.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.238-239.

for deploying the Polaris A-3, Poseidon and Trident long-range missiles.<sup>10</sup> During 1962 Indo-China war, the US ordered its seventh fleet to move into the Bay of Bengal. However with the declaration of ceasefire the task force was recalled. Again in 1963, an American aircraft carrier, submarines and other vessels took part in maneuvers of the CENTO Forces, Code-named MIDLINK, in the Arabian Sea. In the same year the Chairman of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staffs, declared his government's intention to create a special United States Naval Unit in the Indian Ocean independent of the local ports and composed of an aircraft-carrier and patrol and supply ships.<sup>11</sup> In April 1964, such a unit was already plying on the waters of the Indian Ocean under the pretentious name of "Concord Squadron".<sup>12</sup>

In another development Britain and United States signed an agreement in December 1966 that both the countries would use the island of BIOT (British Indian Ocean Territory, viz. Diego Garcia, Aldabra, Desroches and Farquhar) for military purposes for a period of fifty years.<sup>13</sup> Under this agreement, a joint UK-USA base was set up in the most suitable island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean Area. The importance of Diego Garcia lies in the apex of an isosceles triangle - base of which extends from Australia to South Africa. An aircraft placed on this island could carry out surveillance over tanker lanes from the Persian Gulf to the Cape of Good Hope and maritime routes between the Straits of Malacca and the Arabian and Red Seas, Eastern Africa and India. It is situated halfway between the United States Communications Centre in Australia and the Far East, and Africa and West Asia.<sup>14</sup> Other than the geographic location its moderate climate and few numbers of inhabitants gave an added edge to the US intention of turning Diego Garcia into a military base. From 1970 onwards the US accelerated its naval presence in the area. The US naval presence was justified by a superficial concept of "power vacuum in the Indian Ocean" after the withdrawal of British forces from the region. According to the "power vacuum theory", British withdrawal had left the Indian

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<sup>10</sup> Bhatt, n.2, p.5.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p.14.

<sup>12</sup> I. Redco and N. Shashkolsky, *The Indian Ocean: A Sphere of Transition or a Zone of Peace, International Peace and Disarmament Series* (Moscow, 1983), p.27.

<sup>13</sup> Bhatt, n.2, pp.169-72.

<sup>14</sup> P.K.S. Namboodiri; J.P. Anand and Sreedhar, *Intervention in the Indian Ocean* (New Delhi, 1982), p.53.

Ocean area unprotected. Therefore the newly liberated underdeveloped countries of Asia and Africa were in need of a big brother to protect their politico economic interests, as Britain had done earlier. At the time of Soviet invasion in Afghanistan and the Iranian hostage crisis in 1979 when the American vessels' capacity to move rapidly into the area was severely hampered by the distances involved and the lack of necessary sea and aircraft facility to move military equipment and troops, the US began plans to establish the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF).<sup>15</sup> The force was inaugurated in March 1980.

The United States military presence in the Indian Ocean was supplemented by bases in the ports of friendly countries such as Gwadar and Karachi in Pakistan, Trincomalee in Sri Lanka etc.

With the Americans being so active in the Indian Ocean Region it was unlikely that the Soviets would remain silent spectators to the United States movement.<sup>16</sup> With the development of the new strategic weapons based upon nuclear-powered submarines capable of launching medium range ballistic missiles, armed with nuclear weapons, the Indian Ocean area assumed great strategic significance for the Soviet Union. The Soviets did not have any land-based capacity to deny the use of the area to the US. The only alternative for them therefore was to seek to neutralise the western threat by maintaining a sufficient naval presence of their own. Hence from 1968 onwards USSR also made its entry into the Indian Ocean Region. In the first half of the 1968 a small Soviet Task Force consisting of one 'sverdlov' class cruiser, accompanied by a guided missile destroyer, one submarine and one 'Pevek' Class oiler visited ports in Aden, Ceylon, India, Pakistan, the Persian Gulf and Somalia. The number of vessels of the Soviet fleet in the area varied from twelve to twenty which include surface vessels, submarines and logistic.<sup>17</sup>

Thus after the withdrawal of the British both United States and Soviet Union began to get involved in a cut-throat competition to gain supremacy in the Indian Ocean Region. This was mainly because both the super power possessed certain strategic

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<sup>15</sup> Michael D. Wormser, ed., *US Defence Policy*, Third Edition, 1983, Congressional Quarterly Inc., p.186.

<sup>16</sup> Bhatt, n.2, p.48.

<sup>17</sup> K.R. Singh, *Indian Ocean: Big Power Presence and Local Response* (New Delhi, 1977), pp.60-62.

interests in the region. US objective in the Indian Ocean area were spelled out by the document *US Foreign Policy Objectives and Overseas Military Installations*- prepared for the committee of foreign relations of the Senate by the Congressional Research Service in 1979. It says:

The US has both a conventional and perhaps a strategic nuclear military interest in the Indian Ocean region. Military Objective for US conventional forces includes the capability to: 1. protect US economic interest in the Persian Gulf region, 2. employ or threaten force in support of US diplomatic objectives in the Middle East, 3. secure the Indian Ocean air and sea routes against harassment or interdiction, 4. intervene in support of other objectives in the littoral and, related to all of these, 5. balance Soviet forces in the region and attain superiority in a crisis. The US also possesses a potential strategic nuclear military objective of deploying when necessary or convenient, ballistic missile submarines targeted on the USSR.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly the Soviet interest in the Indian Ocean Region can be categorised as follows: 1. to possess warm water port, 2. protecting the major maritime thoroughfare linking the west and east of the Soviet Union, 3. import of oil from Persian Gulf countries at cheaper price, 4. neutralising American moves or to provide a threat to the West by controlling the Indian Ocean, 5. containment of China, 6. influencing the littoral states of the region ideologically.

Superpower naval presence in the Indian Ocean Region raised serious concern among the littoral states of the region and this security concern has given birth to the concept of Indian Ocean as Zone of Peace. The objective of making Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace was to ensure that the major powers, by tacit or explicit action, by mutual agreement or unilaterally, agree to respect the region as a zone where they will refrain from any action injurious to the cause of peace. It means that the great powers will likewise voluntarily limit their involvement in the regional security arrangements and will not seek or use any facilities for militarising the Indian Ocean. A parallel corollary of a peace zone is that the states bordering the Indian Ocean will themselves refrain from action prejudicial to the concept of a peace zone.<sup>19</sup> With this objective in mind Sri Lanka took the initiative to formulate the concept of Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. In the

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<sup>18</sup> As quoted in K. Subrahmanyam, *Indian Security Perspectives* (New Delhi, 1982), p.23.

<sup>19</sup> Devendra Kaushik, *The Indian Ocean: Towards a Peace Zone* (New Delhi, 1972), p.187.



Non-aligned conferences of 1964, 1970 and 1973 and the commonwealth conference of 1971 and 1972 the issue of Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace was raised to reach an international agreement on the concept. The issue was taken up before the United Nations in September 1971. At the 28<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly in 1973, the resolution of zone of peace was passed and in the next session in 1974 a resolution on the implementation of the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace was adopted. However in practice nothing was done and late 1970s saw the increasing foreign presence in the region.

### **2.3 India's Response to the Super Power Naval Presence in the Indian Ocean Region**

India vehemently criticised the super power naval presence in the Indian Ocean. India felt that the naval presence in the Indian Ocean Region would bind to affect India's security and the interest in the region. In this context KM Panikkar said:

While to other countries the Indian Ocean is only one of the important Oceanic areas, to India it is the vital sea. Her life lines are concentrated in that area. Her future is dependent on the freedom of that vast water surface. No industrial development, no commercial growth, no stable political structure is possible for her, unless the Indian Ocean is free and her own shores fully protected. The Indian Ocean must remain therefore, truly Indian.<sup>20</sup>

It is thus evident that India would find it difficult to reconcile its national interest with the dominance of the Indian Ocean by any hostile power or powers. India's another concern was that military base in Diego Garcia would lead to tensions and rivalries particularly to the detriment of the interest of the littoral states.<sup>21</sup> India started opposing military naval presence of the superpowers and bases in Diego Garcia both at home and in the International fora. The issue of Diego Garcia was raised in Lok Sabha in November 1968 and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi stated: "we are opposed to the establishment of foreign military bases and believed that the Indian Ocean should be an area of peace, free

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<sup>20</sup> K.M. Panikkar, *India and the Indian Ocean* (London, 1945), p.83.

<sup>21</sup> Bhatt, n.2, p.76.

from any kind of military base.”<sup>22</sup> India totally rejected the “power vacuum” theory and considered it nothing but a justification to continue the colonial interest of the imperialists. Addressing the “One Asia assembly” in New Delhi, on 6 February 1973, then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had stated:

Except in a few known and glaring instances, Western nations have withdrawn as colonial powers, but their political or military presence continues in our continent. This has been done in the name of filling a vacuum or to wage a crusade against communism or other doctrines. In India we have always rejected what we consider the rather naïve theory of political vacuums. Europe shed its colonies not out of altruism or caprice but because of the rising pressure of Asian nationalism. With this assertive nationalism how can there be any vacuum? The very theory of power vacuum is thus a continuation of the colonial outlook in another grab.<sup>23</sup>

Thus Although the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace was never an Indian initiative, the concept gradually got identified as an important element of Indian Foreign Policy.<sup>24</sup> The concept of Zone of Peace is very much inherent in the concept of non alignment which requires that the land territories, air space and territorial waters of non aligned states must be closed to great power conflict and rivalries.<sup>25</sup> In Singapore Conference of Commonwealth Heads of Governments in January 1971, India had strongly supported the proposals for neutralisation of the Indian Ocean and its recognition as a Zone of Peace.<sup>26</sup> India also hosted an International Conference on the Indian Ocean organised by the Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Organisations, on 14 November 1974, in Delhi, in which the Indian leaders urged for immediate withdrawal of the United States Task Force from the Indian Ocean and an early end to foreign military bases in the region. The same demand was reiterated in various other conferences such as: 20<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Prime Minister’s Conference in Kingstone (Jamaika) on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1975 and the 21<sup>st</sup> commonwealth Parliamentary Conference at New Delhi on 28 October 1975. India had also given full support to Mauritian claim on Diego Garcia as it was originally belonged to Mauritius. In January 1976, India provided three suggestions to the UN

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<sup>22</sup> Lok Sabha, *Debates*, November 1968.

<sup>23</sup> As quoted in S.P. Seth, “The Indian Ocean and Indo American Relations”, *Asian Survey* (Berkeley), vol.15, no.8, Aug. 1975, p.650.

<sup>24</sup> C. Raja Mohan, “Indian Ocean: The Changing Strategic Context”, in Raja Mohan, eds. *Indian Ocean and US- Soviet Détente* (New Delhi, 1991), P.14.

<sup>25</sup> Kaushik, n.19, p.194.

<sup>26</sup> As mentioned in Bhatt, n.2, p.81.

Adhoc Committee on the Indian Ocean for holding an International Conference on the Indian Ocean. These suggestions were:

- an attempt should be made to ensure that conference is held and the great powers attend it;
- an assessment of the military presence of major powers in the Indian Ocean Region be made; and
- measures for the elimination of weapons and bases in the region be taken.

However nothing was done by the UN Adhoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and the conference had been postponed year-after year with the result that people gave up any hope of its being held in the near future. Following the fall of Shah Regime in Iran and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan during 1977-79, the situation in the Indian Ocean deteriorated. The Diego-Garcia base underwent an accelerated modernisation programme. Both the United States and Soviet Union acquired bases in various littoral countries which included strategically important points in the Indian Ocean stretching from North-West Cape in Australia to South Africa.

The supply of sophisticated arms to Pakistan was a matter of concern for India. During the 1980s the growth of the Pakistani Navy was unprecedented; it virtually doubled its surface fleet, acquired sophisticated long-range anti-ship missiles, procured an additional submarine, constructed a major naval base to the west of Karachi, and set up marine commando unit and attempted to enhance its maritime reconnaissance capability. During the same period China also planned acquisition of an aircraft carrier and the construction of facilities in the Indian Ocean and shifted its naval doctrine. Although this should be seen in terms of the assertion of Chinese military power in the Western Pacific Ocean and the attainment of an influential role in world affairs, it could constitute a serious threat to India's maritime interest, as well as affect its role in the area.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Bhatt, n.2, pp.80-87.

<sup>28</sup> Roy Chaudhury, n.1, pp.97-101.



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In such tensed situation India continued raising its voice against the militarisation of Indian Ocean Region, but in vein. The failure to prevent the Indian Ocean from super power naval rivalry and growth of Pakistan and Chinese Navy led India to evolve an effective naval strategy by modernising its navy and practicing naval diplomacy in its neighbourhood.

## **2.4 Growth of Indian Navy**

In the first two decades after independence, India totally neglected its navy as the main security threat was from land frontier. In order to build an independent naval capability in the Indian Ocean in the long run, four British naval chiefs of Indian Navy Admiral John Talbot Savignac Hall, Admiral Sir Edward Parry, Admiral Sir Mark Pizey and Admiral Stephen Hope Carlill brought out four different naval expansion plans for Indian Navy. These naval plans proposed for acquisitions of the ships necessary for modern naval warfare, aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, submarines, Hunt class frigates etc.<sup>29</sup> These plans were not implemented properly due to lack of fund. In 1950-51 out of Rs. 168 crore allocated to Defence, the navy received only Rs 8 crore which was not more than 4 percent of the defence budget. In 1959-60 it went up to 12%, but in 1964-65 it dropped again to 4%. The navy continued to receive the lowest share among the three military forces due to the persistent land-oriented defence perception and absence of naval threat to Indian security.<sup>30</sup> India felt that due to its non-aligned foreign policy it did not have to get threatened from the two super powers. The British naval presence in the Indian Ocean was not perceived as a threat to Indian security. After the communist revolution Chinese warships did not have the ability to reach the Indian Ocean. Most of the Indian Ocean littoral states, who were the colonies of European nations were recovering from the war and were increasingly pre-occupied with the Soviet Union. The Dutch were concerned primarily with the domestic situation in Indonesia, and the Japanese were in no position to threaten Indian security. Only possible threat was Pakistan, but the Indian government felt that that the navy could deal adequately with the Pakistani Navy in the unlikely event

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp.26-41.

<sup>30</sup> For a detailed overview of the resource allocation to the Navy, see Table 1 and Table 2 in Appendix 1, pp.81-82.

that it attempted to invade Indian island territories or launch an amphibious assault against its shores. Thus Pakistani Navy was also not perceived to constitute a critical threat to Indian security. Therefore the government was convinced that it should not increase naval expenditure.<sup>31</sup>

Though initially Nehru and the Indian Cabinet opposed to the acquisition of a carrier, in May 1956, the Indian government finally decided to place an order for a carrier. The government was totally against the acquisition of submarine. However, after the 1962 war with China, though navy's share of the defence budget declined to the lowest level since independence, the government indicated its willingness to consider the inclusion of armed submarines in the Indian fleet.<sup>32</sup> In marked contrast to government policy in the past, Defence Minister of that period of time Y B Chavan informed the Lok Sabha that the submarine was not necessarily an offensive weapon, but a defensive one as well.<sup>33</sup> In 1964 when Pakistan acquired an armed American submarine India became desperate to establish a submarine arm in its navy. Therefore in order to procure the requisite armaments for the defence services, Defence minister Y B Chavan led official delegation to the US, the Soviet Union and Britain in 1964.<sup>34</sup> But both the US and Britain were reluctant to sell submarines to India. The US was reluctant to transfer naval weapons to India on the basis of financial cost, the sophisticated nature of the equipment, and the need for Senate approval.<sup>35</sup> The US also did not want to disrupt the growing military relationship with Pakistan. Britain on the other hand agreed to provide financial and technical assistance for the construction of three Leander class frigates in an Indian shipyard, but reluctant to sell three Daring class destroyers or to transfer three armed submarines and Porpoise class submarines to India. The British government only offered the options of acquiring older Weapon class ships and old submarines or placing an order to build a new Oberon class submarine in a British shipyard. India did not want to acquire the old submarine as it did not suit the navy's needs. In the case of new submarine, India

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<sup>31</sup> Roy-Chaudhury, n.1, pp.36-37.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., pp. 37-50.

<sup>33</sup> India, Lok Sabha, *Debates*, series 3, vol.16, session 37, 8 April 1963, col.8477.

<sup>34</sup> Roy Chaudhury, n.1, p.51.

<sup>35</sup> KPS Menon, "India and the Soviet Union", in B.R. Nanda, ed., *Indian Foreign Policy: the Nehru Years* (New Delhi, 1976), p.145.

could not meet the cost of the submarine due to the shortage of the foreign exchange and Britain was not ready to subsidise its construction to any great extent. Thus India was forced to turn to Soviet Union.

It is important to mention here that in 1964 though the USSR was ready to supply naval armaments, including submarines to India, Indian Navy and the government was hesitant to introduce Soviet vessels into the navy. However in August 1965 an Indian defence delegation left for Moscow to negotiate the purchase of four submarines. In September 1965 an agreement for the transfer of four Soviet Foxtrot class submarines was signed in Moscow. Soviet landing craft and Petya class small frigates were also ordered. The payment for these arms was to be made over a 10 year period in goods or Indian currency at 2% annual interest.<sup>36</sup> After the 1965 war with Pakistan, Indian Navy began to advocate an expansion of its forces and the establishment of a second fleet. Vice Admiral B S Soman, proposed a comprehensive expansion plan to the government in early 1966. This included the immediate procurement of warships, including submarines ordered from the Soviet Union, and a large number of principal surface combatants.<sup>37</sup> The Indian government, however, refused to implement the plan. Again in March 1966 Vice admiral A K Chatterjee after assuming the charge of Chief of Naval Staff advocated a major naval expansion plan in which he stressed two additional points- the need to obtain a balance amongst the armed forces, and the economic dimension of maritime security. Since the economic growth of the country was dependent upon naval forces (in protection of maritime trade), an adequate naval capability could ensure economic security. In addition, a planned increase in commercial shipping and shipbuilding activities could bring about economies of scale for a military shipbuilding programme, thereby making naval construction programmes viable and acceptable.<sup>38</sup> Vice Admiral Chatterjee also went to the extent of claiming that the Indian Navy would assume complete charge of the Indian Ocean in the wake of Britain's military withdrawal from

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<sup>36</sup> Joel Larus, 'The Neglected Service Faces the Future', *US Naval Institute Proceedings* (New York City), March 1981, p.79.

<sup>37</sup> Roy-Chaudhury, n.1, p.58.

<sup>38</sup> Raju G C Thomas, "The Indian Navy in the Seventies", *Pacific Affair* (Canada), Winter 1975-76, pp. 513-14.

the area.<sup>39</sup> According to him expansion of Indian Navy is very important so that it can fill the vacuum of maritime power in the Indian Ocean in order to prevent some less peaceful nation stepping in and threatening India.<sup>40</sup> But Indian government did not buy navy's perceptions. Defence Minister Swaran Singh dismissed the notion of the two fleet navy and rejected the notion of power vacuum in the Indian Ocean. However although the Indian government rejected the concept of a power vacuum in the Indian ocean, it gave some thought to the changing strategic situation, and the possibility of maximising its diplomatic and economic opportunities in the area.<sup>41</sup> In this respect, it agreed to a limited expansion of the navy in the late 1960s. Accordingly Indian Navy ordered eight Osa I class (modernised Komar class) missile boats from the Soviet Union in 1969. These arrived in early 1971 at Calcutta. The Navy's first submarine, Kalvari, arrived at Vishakhapattanam on 16 July 1968, followed by the other three in 1968 and 1969. In addition Petya II class small frigates, five Poluchat class fast patrol boats, four polnocny class landing craft, and a submarine tender from the Soviet Union were added to the fleet. Limited naval facilities on the East coast at Vishakapatanam were also developed.<sup>42</sup>

However from 1970 onwards India started giving a serious thought about the modernisation of navy. The 1971 United States ENTERPRISE mission led India to consider that its sea frontier was as important to its security as its land borders.<sup>43</sup> K. Subramanyam warned that as a result of the 1971 war and the situation that emerged after the war, there was a necessity of considerable expanding of the Indian Navy in order to patrol the Indian Ocean waters so as to know the happening there.<sup>44</sup> Swaran Singh, then Foreign Minister, while replying to a question in the Lok Sabha said: "I agree that in order to keep away outside forces from the Indian Ocean, the countries in the region including India have to strengthen their navies". However he convinced the house that Indian naval strength would always be used for strengthening peace in the region and not

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<sup>39</sup> *The Times* (London), 4 March 1968.

<sup>40</sup> A K Chatterjee, "India and Sea Power", *The Hindu-Sunday Weekly Magazine* (Chennai), 11 December 1966.

<sup>41</sup> Thomas, n.37, pp.504-6.

<sup>42</sup> Roy Chaydhury, n.1, p.62.

<sup>43</sup> Bhatt, n.2, p.82.

<sup>44</sup> Jagdish Vibharkar, *Afro Asian Security and the Indian Ocean* (Delhi, 1974), p.75.

to the detriment of any country.<sup>45</sup> Subsequently Indian Navy grew unprecedented way during 1976-90.<sup>46</sup>

## **2.5 Use of Navy in Support of India's Regional Security Policy in the Cold War Period**

The Indian Ocean Region has been a conflict ridden area. Most of the countries of the region had internal as well as external problems. The smaller countries were not well equipped to tackle the security challenges. In such circumstance there was every possibility that these countries might seek help from outside powers. On the other hand the super powers tried to intervene in the region by helping the small powers. This raised an alarm to India. To keep the super powers away from the conflicts of the region India tried to provide all kind of support to its smaller neighbours. India had to project that it had both capability and willingness to protect the region. Navy was used for the first time in support of this policy during JVP insurrection in Sri Lanka in 1971. Indian Navy was also used to fight against two other security challenges in Sri Lanka and Maldives in 1987 and 1988 respectively. Indian naval presence both in Sri Lanka and Maldives clearly sent the message that India would not tolerate any attempt to overthrow a friendly and democratically elected regime in the neighbourhood and by any means would suppress such attempt to restore stability in the region. The subsequent chapter deals with this theme.

## **2.6 India's Regional Security Policy in the Post Cold War Period**

In the post cold war period a new world order emerged. In this new world order we have a unipolar situation with strong current and considerable activity in the direction of making the world multipolar. In the new world order India is keen to play an effective

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<sup>45</sup> Lok Sabha, *Debates*, 2 December 1973, Statement by S. Swaran Singh, Minister of External Affairs, on the International Situations, Ministry of External Affairs.

<sup>46</sup> For detailed overview of the growth of the navy during 1947-1990, see Appendix 2, pp.83-86.



regional and/or larger global role than it had hitherto been doing.<sup>47</sup>

The concept of globalisation and liberalisation gained the currency. In the South Asian region also India and its neighbours launched themselves on the path of economic reform and globalisation.<sup>48</sup> As a result the regional economic cooperation became important. In the cold war period India's policy towards neighbours raised suspicion among the smaller neighbours and consequently they started growing an anti-India feeling. To change this negative attitude of its smaller neighbours India needed a framework for positive cooperation with the neighbours. Accordingly a new regional policy was outlined by I.K. Gujral known as Gujral Doctrine. Gujral outlined the doctrine in a speech at Chatham House in London in September 1996:

The United Front Government's neighbourhood policy now stands on five basic principles: firstly, with neighbours like Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka, India does not ask for reciprocity but gives all it can in good faith and trust. Secondly, no South Asian country will allow its territory to be used against the interest of another country of the region. Thirdly, none will interfere in the internal affairs of another. Fourthly, all South Asian countries must respect each others territorial integrity and sovereignty. And finally, they will settle all their disputes through peaceful bilateral negotiations...<sup>49</sup>

In the post cold war period definition of security has changed. It is no longer limited to military might but extends beyond to a more comprehensive definition encompassing economic strength, internal cohesion that enables exercise of national will and technological progress. In this changing circumstances isolationism is impossible. Therefore India sought to come out of that isolation. India is trying to establish economic ties and political dialogue with key capitals in the Indian Ocean littoral. India's activism in South –East Asia, Afghanistan, Central and East Asia, the Persian Gulf, and the parts of Africa became an important feature of India's new foreign policy.<sup>50</sup> In Brajesh Mishra's word:

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<sup>47</sup> SD Muni, "An Asian Balance of Power" in Jasjit Singh, ed., *Reshaping Asian Security* (New Delhi, 2001), p.4.

<sup>48</sup> Raja Mohan, n.8, p.242.

<sup>49</sup> I.K. Gujral, *A Foreign Policy for India* (New Delhi, 1998), pp.74-75.

<sup>50</sup> C. Raja Mohan, n.8, p.207.

A new kind of cooperation is needed, a cooperation not based exclusively on alignment of national interests, a cooperation which while not violating national sovereignty, promotes a shared responsibility for globally managing the new threats to global security. Such a cooperative venture requires both greater participation and greater accountability. It requires greater engagement, not only when it suits national interests, but in an unceasing manner for that is the dynamic of globalisation.<sup>51</sup>

Accordingly, India has adopted a new forward policy. Raja Mohan in his book *Crossing the Rubicon* mentioned about six elements that consist India's new forward policy<sup>52</sup>:

1. Revival of commercial cooperation wherever possible.
2. Building institutional and political links with neighbouring regions.
3. Developing physical connectivity to the neighbouring regions.
4. Undertaking mega energy projects- such as transregional pipelines- to connect sources of natural gas in the neighbourhood to the energy hungry Indian market.
5. Initiation of defence contacts with key nations in the extended neighbourhood as well as the major powers.
6. Strategic competition with China and Pakistan –which is an unstated element of India's forward policy in the neighbouring regions.

Now India is trying to engage itself with several countries within and outside the region. At the same time India is fully conscious of the importance of keeping the probability of an armed conflict low, by maintaining an adequate level of defence preparedness and negotiating and implementing appropriate confidence and security building measures.

In the post cold war period there has been a shift in the nature of great power policies *vis-a-vis* the Indian Ocean Region. Not only the force projection capabilities of western powers have been greatly enhanced but their zone of military intervention has now extended beyond the coast deep into the hinterland, as reflected in military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, in the form of war against terrorism.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Brajesh Misra, "Global Security: An Indian Perspective", <http://meaindia.nic.in/disarmament/dm13apr00.htm>

<sup>52</sup> C. Raja Mohan, n.8, pp.209-10.

<sup>53</sup> KR Singh, "India, Indian Ocean and Regional Maritime Cooperation", *International Studies* (New Delhi), vol.41, no.2, 2004, pp.195-218.

On the other hand another emerging power China has acquired surface and subsurface combatants to acquire blue water capability to project power beyond China's territorial waters. China has sought access to strategically located islands in the Bay of Bengal. The naval bases at Hianggyi islands at the mouth of the Bassein River, and the ports at Akyab and Great Coco islands are modernised. These are for dual purposes and could be used to site listening stations with SIGINT access to much of East India and South-East Asia.<sup>54</sup> China has obtained or is trying to obtain naval facilities in some of the smaller states of the region like Pakistan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and so on. China has also continued to supply weapons to many of these countries and building strategically important infrastructure projects in some of these countries. China's growing interest, interactions and acceptance in the Indian Ocean Littoral and its increasing presence in their multilateral forums, as also China's regular naval presence in the Indian Ocean can be in tune with President Jiang's doctrine of expansion of China's maritime influence over the larger region of Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean.<sup>55</sup> Though Indo-China relations are developing in a positive note, yet India should not take increasing Chinese naval presence in the region very lightly and ignore it, as in 1993, General Zhao Zangi, then Commandant of China's Academy of Military sciences, is on record having said that China would extend its naval operations farther than the South and East China Seas to check attempts by India to "dominate" the Indian Ocean.<sup>56</sup>

Other than these powers, presence of non state actors in the Indian Ocean Region also raised concern for India. Due to these non states actors, maritime crime is increasing day by day which may very well affect India's sea borne trade. Due to the globalised nature of these sorts of crimes it is impossible to counter them single handedly. Cooperation among the littoral states is needed to counter such maritime crimes. In such circumstances India needs to revitalise its maritime diplomacy to build new bridges of understanding with other maritime powers in the India Ocean Region. Such a policy will not only help promote regional maritime cooperation but would also act as a confidence-

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<sup>54</sup> Bhayasam Kasturi, "Indian Navy and Indian Ocean", *Journal of Indian Ocean Studies* (New Delhi), vol.3 no.1, Nov.1995, pp.58-65.

<sup>55</sup> Swaran Singh, "China's Indian Ocean Policy-India's Security Options", *Journal of Indian Ocean Studies*, vol.13 no.1, April 2005, pp.20-32.

<sup>56</sup> "China Plans to Build Up Navy", *The Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), 13 January 1993.

building measure to create a more stable maritime order around Indian waters in the Indian Ocean.<sup>57</sup>

## **2.7 Use of Navy in the Support of India's Post Cold War Regional Security Policy**

Indian Navy contributed a lot in the realisation of Indian government's new policy towards its neighbors by undertaking joint naval exercises with friendly navies and providing assistance during crisis and security challenges. It is important to mention here that joint naval exercises with foreign navies are not new. There were joint multilateral naval exercises, organised in 1950s and 1960s by the British and held annually amongst the navies of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, with the participation of Royal Navy, and at times, the Australian Navy and New Zealand Navy as well. However with the increased level of cold war tensions, and the onset of superpower naval rivalry in the Indian Ocean, no such joint naval exercise was carried out (except in the late 1970s with Australian and New Zealand Naval Forces and in 1989 with the Indonesian Navy) as India's non-aligned foreign policy did not allow any joint naval exercises to take place with the two major superpower or their allies.<sup>58</sup> However in 1991 in a major shift in policy, Indian government accepted the Navy's proposal to interact with foreign navies. In the present era diplomacy India believes in engaging and maintaining even and balanced relations with all countries. Joint naval exercises are seen by the Indian government as a means to build confidence and trust in the relationships amongst the littoral states as well as to signify India's interest in peace and stability in the Indian Ocean. Moreover interactions with foreign navies, especially those which are highly professional and technologically advanced, enable the Indian Navy to learn valuable lessons for war fighting and peace-time operation.<sup>59</sup> India is now engaged with joint naval exercises with various foreign navies. Indian Navy keeps visiting foreign ports. Indian ports continue to host visit by foreign warships. India carried out bilateral exercises with friendly navies such as; Singapore, Indonesia, France, Britain and the USA. On a few occasions, the Indian Navy

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<sup>57</sup> Singh, n.53.

<sup>58</sup> Rahul Roy Chaudhury, "Naval Cooperation: India and the Indian Ocean", *Strategic Analysis* (New Delhi), vol.19, no.3, June 1996, pp.319-36.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.319-23.

has responded to requests from foreign governments to provide aid and disaster relief. The biggest of such disaster relieves was to Sri Lanka during 2004 tsunami (Discussed in details in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter).

## **2.8 Conclusion**

The growth and importance of Indian Navy by and large has depended upon India's threat perception and security interest in the region. Various developments in the region have threatened India's interest and aspirations. India realised that mere rhetoric is not enough to safeguard its interest. It has to use some coercion and military might without making any body hostile. India needs to project its capability to influence the smaller neighbours without giving the impression that it is trying to intervene militarily. Moreover India also has to project in the world that it has the capacity to be a global player. To serve these purposes Indian Navy was used by the government as a tool of diplomacy. In the following chapters an attempt has been made to find out how far the Navy was successful in its diplomatic mission in the region.

## *Chapter 3*

## **INDIAN NAVAL ASSISTANCE DURING SECURITY CHALLENGE**

National security means the ability of a nation to protect its territorial integrity against external threat or attack, to preserve the constitutional or political order that it has given to itself, to maintain and further economic system, protect and promote its internal values or legitimate interest. When these elements of security are threatened or challenged by external or internal entity and the nation is unable to protect them by itself, it seeks outside help. In the South Asian region almost all the countries have already faced such security challenge from both external and internal forces. In this chapter an attempt has been made to study three cases of such security challenge, viz. JVP insurrection in Sri Lanka in 1971, ethnic problem in Sri Lanka in the 1980s and coup attempt to overthrow the Gayoom regime in 1988 in Maldives. In all the three cases Indian help was sought and Indian navy played important role to suppress those security challenges. Now the question is why did Indian navy provide its assistance during such security challenges in the neighbouring countries? How far the navy was successful? What was the impact of such naval support on India?

### **3.1 India's Naval Support to Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka's geo-strategic location in the Indian Ocean area has always remained a significant parameter to the problem of security of India.<sup>1</sup> India always tried to keep the extra regional powers out of Sri Lanka's politics, for security reason. At the same time India was aware of the fact that Sri Lanka needed outside help in case there was any security challenge or crisis. Therefore India tried to involve itself with Sri Lankan issue and provided help to it so that Sri Lanka did not have to seek help from outside. Geographical proximity and cultural link with Sri Lanka are also responsible for India's involvement in Sri Lanka. But Sri Lanka always looked India's involvement in Sri Lankan issue with suspicion. Sri Lanka perceived India as a threat. This is mainly because of the following reasons:

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<sup>1</sup> Shelton U. Kodikara, *Foreign Policy of Sri Lanka: A Third World Perspective* (Delhi, 1982), p.22.

Firstly, the memories of frequent invasions from Tamil Nadu and ethnic linkages between the Tamils across the Palk Strait have made the majority Sinhalese suspicious of the Indians.

Secondly, on the eve of independence and even after independence various academics and leaders including Nehru talked about making Sri Lanka a unit of the Indian federation. According to Nehru, Sri Lanka...would inevitably be drawn into a closer union with India, "presumably as an autonomous unit of the Indian federation".<sup>2</sup> In 1949, in Bombay speech a president of the Indian National Congress said:

India must sooner or later enter into a treaty with the Ceylonese people so that Ceylon may become an organic part of the body politic... India and Ceylon must have a common strategy and common defence resources. It can not be that Ceylon is in friendship with a group with which India is not in friendship- not that Ceylon has no right to make its own alignments and declare its own affiliations- but if there are two hostile groups in the world, and Ceylon and India are with one or the other of them and not with the same group, it will be a bad day for both.<sup>3</sup>

This kind of expressions of expansionism naturally developed a sense of fear among the Sri Lankan people.

Thirdly, due to its small size and poor military strength Sri Lanka always felt vulnerable and perceived an imaginary threat from India. In another word Indo-Sri Lankan relationship was afflicted with "big power versus small power syndrome".<sup>4</sup>

Fourthly, there were media reports confirming the fact that from 1981 onwards India had provided training, weaponry and logistical support to Tamil militant groups. In 1984, General Vernon Walter, a senior figure in the US strategic and intelligence establishment told then Sri Lankan Minister for National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, that the US had satellite photographs of training camps for Tamil separatist groups in India and that he had told his interlocutors in New Delhi that if India

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<sup>2</sup> W.H. Wriggings, *Ceylon: Dilemmas of A New Nation* (New Jersey, 1960), p.399.

<sup>3</sup> As stated by Dr Pattabhi Sitaramaya in interview with representative of *Ceylon Daily News* (Colombo), 23 April 1949.

<sup>4</sup> P. Sahadevan, "India-Maldives Relations," *Dialogue* (New Delhi) vol.5, no.3, Jan-March 2004, p.98.



kept on denying the existence of such camps and did not close them down, the US would release these satellite photographs to the media to embarrass the govt. of India. This kind of news annoyed the Sinhalese all the more.

This vulnerability made Sri Lanka to take help from other foreign powers which was perceived by India as a threat to its security. Therefore India always tried to provide support to Sri Lanka whenever its security was challenged so that it did not have to seek help from others.

### **3.1.1 JVP Insurrections in Sri Lanka and India's Naval assistance**

In 1971, Sri Lanka faced a security challenge from Janatha Vimukti Paramuna (JVP). JVP is a revolutionary group. It was launched by ex-member of Ceylon Communist Party Rohana Wijeweera and others in mid-1966. In the initial years they tried to revolutionize the people by delivering lecture on topics such as, crisis of the capitalist system in Ceylon; the history of the left movement in Ceylon; the history of the socialist revolutions; Indian expansion, and the path of revolution in Ceylon. During the election campaign in early 1970 JVP made its first public appearance. The government was fully aware of the JVP's activities. To probe this revolutionary group government set up a special CID unit. On March 16, 1970, at Julgama, in the Hambantota district, police arrested about 12 young people suspected of connections with the JVP, including Rohana Wijeweera. He had with him a revolver and there was evidence that he was the leader of an underground movement which wanted to overthrow the government by force of arms. This led to Wijeweera being placed behind bars during the elections to the seventh parliament. They were accused of being "Che Guverist" and also being US agents. The JVP at this stage supported a SLFP-LSSP-CP common program; hence the opposition parties committed themselves to releasing them once they were elected to power.

The United Front (SLFP-LSSP-CP) won the election of May 27, 1970 and Srimavo Bandaranaike was elected prime minister for the second time. In July 1970, the United Front government released Rohana Wijeweera and other JVP members. After the

release, JVP enjoyed political freedom and were able to publish a paper called Vimukthi (Liberation), and hold public meetings. At this stage, the JVP continuously reminded the government of its election promises. They pressed the government to nationalise banks, plantations and implement the Promised Land reform and other socialistic programs. The first Issue of Vimukthi, that came out on August 1, 1970, declared in its editorial that the JVP was pledged to liberate the people of Ceylon from oppression and exploitation and to solve the problems of the unemployed youth of the country. "We certainly wish to destroy British and US imperialism and Indian expansionism and the capitalist anti-revolutionary plots. But we do not want to destroy any socialist program that the government wishes to out."<sup>5</sup> On August 10, 1970, Rohana Wijeweera, at a rally in Colombo said, "We will continue to support the government if they progress towards socialism, then they will receive all our support, but if they fail to reach the goal, then we will do so."<sup>6</sup>

Subsequently number of rallies was held at various locations in the country between August and October 1970 to gain people's support to take over the power. The JVP rapidly grew in popular strength. Unemployment and economic inequalities played a major role for the JVP to gain support. The bulk of its support was drawn from students and unemployed youths under the age of 25 years.

The police began to watch the JVP activities very closely. Young Sinhala youths were being arrested in the rural areas. The police and army jointly set up a counter intelligence unit to monitor the activities of the JVP. In September 1970, two workers involved in a strike at Keengalla estate were shot by police and the strike was broken down. In November 1970 the JVP, the LSSP-R and the YSF (Young Socialist Front) organised a mass rally at Keengalla estate to protest the killing of the two estate workers. The meeting was addressed by Rohana Wijeweera, Bala Tampoe of the LSSP-R and Illanchelyan of the YSF.

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<sup>5</sup> "A Lost Revolution: The JVP Insurrection 1971", <http://www.virtuallibrary.Tantrimale.htm>.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

In September 1970, Wijeweera appointed Loku Athula to be in charge of the Arms Section of the JVP and directed him to collect 100,000 bombs immediately. Accordingly, shells were manufactured at a foundry in Pilapitiya and were stored at Kapila Motors, Kandana and at Weliveriya, close to Loku Athula's home. In January 1971, Rohana Wijeweera made it known that he was the General-Secretary of the JVP when he replied to questions asked in a press conference. On February 27, 1971, the JVP held another mass rally in Colombo. It marked a big increase in the size of the audience. JVP members committed a number of bank robbery to raise funds. The money they robbed was used to purchase arms and ammunition. A sum of Rs. 18,000 had been spent on the purchase of empty tins from Sigma Industries, Nugegoda for the manufacture of hand bombs. By early 1971, recruitment to the JVP had been stopped and members were urged to collect as much money as possible, through whatever means (mortgaging lands and homes) to arm the movement. The promise was that once the JVP secured power, the members would be able to reap the fruits of their sacrifice.

At the JVP's last public rally before the uprising, held at Colombo's Hyde Park on February 27, 1971, Wijeweera made a stirring call. "Let the revolution of the workers, farmers and soldiers be triumphant."<sup>7</sup> In that meeting held at Hyde Park he made provocative statements. He openly challenged the state by saying that the date of the revolution will be the one on which the state decides to attack the JVP. In conclusion, he told the receptive crowd, "though we may be killed, our cry will not be silenced."<sup>8</sup> In February 1971, a clear warning went to the authorities that something was wrong among university students. The JVP had hidden a large number of detonators in the ceiling of Peradeniya University's Mars Hall, but due to the heat they began exploding like firecrackers. The explosions went on for five days. Meanwhile, in March, a bomb explosion in Kegalle killed five JVP members. The police began raiding JVP hideouts. Within the movement, pressure was building up to launch the revolution. Srimavo Bandaranaike on March 16, 1971 held a cabinet meeting and announced the JVP's plot to overthrow the government. The prime minister declared a state of emergency and a dust-to-dawn curfew was imposed in some areas and the army and the police were given full

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

powers of arbitrary arrest and disposal of bodies without having to carry out inquests or inform the relatives of those killed. Srimavo Bandaranaike went on the radio to broadcast and made an appeal to the Ceylonese people for vigilance against terrorists groups. Srimavo Bandaranaike, the prime minister, explained to the nation the reason for the declaration of the emergency. She made an appeal to foreign governments to come to Ceylon's assistance in its hour of peril. These included the United States of America, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, China, India and Pakistan.<sup>9</sup>

Even after that JVP did not stop its violent movement. By mid-March 1971, there was clear evidence of preparations for a violent attack against the government. By March 26, 1971, the government announced that nearly 300 persons had been arrested for suspected involvement with the JVP, and the arrests included Rohana Wijeweera, who was captured on March 13. The announcement also included the recovery of arms and ammunition from JVP suspects. Rohana Wijeweera and 12 others were transferred to Fort Hammenheil, a temporary prison off the Karainagar Naval base.

On April 2, a crucial meeting was held at 2 pm. Nine members of the JVP inner circle met in secret at the Sangaramaya temple of the Vidyodaya University in Kelaniya. The inner circle decided that all police stations in the country would be attacked on the night of 5 April. A coded telegram was sent on April 4, saying "JVP Appuhamy expired, funeral 5".<sup>10</sup> Also, the signal for the attack was the pop song "Neela Kobeyya", played over the state owned radio - Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation. The meeting was apparently convened in response to a message sent from Jaffna jail by Wijeweera, who requested that posters and leaflets should be published calling for his release and in the case of an attack, 500 comrades should be sent to Jaffna to secure his release. Accordingly, on April 5, 1971 police stations at Badulla, Kandy, Moneragala, Amparai and Nuwera Eliya were attacked. A group of 25 to 30 JVP cadres assaulted police stations in those administrative districts, using home-made weapons. Nearly 93 of the total of 273 police stations in the country fell to the insurgents. The government also evacuated many more police stations located in the most vulnerable areas. Almost the

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<sup>9</sup> Rohan Gunaratne, *Sri Lanka: A Lost Revolution* (Sri Lanka, 2001), pp.107-8.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

entire area of the south and west of Ceylon fell into the hands of the JVP and it was rumored that a JVP garrison was on the move to capture Colombo, the capital city. On April 5 during the night, Sirimavo Bandaranaike had to hide under her office table, as Temple Trees (her official residence) received a false alarm that the JVP had managed to cross parliament building and were marching on the Galle Road, on their way to the Temple Trees, to arrest the prime minister. Felix Dias Bandaranaike had arrived at midnight and the prime minister and others left for Colombo harbor to spend the night on a ship anchored there.

The JVP had planned to take into custody Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike on the night of 6 April 1971. This task had been entrusted to JVP activist Piyasiri who was to have been assisted by Raja Nimal, a student of Sri Sangharajah Maha Vidyalaya, Maradana. Piyasiri's instructions to Nimal were that his group should attack the residence of the Prime Minister, capture her and bring her dead or alive to Campbell Park that night. Fortunately, the Government received prior information of the plan and curfew was declared immediately, thwarting the menacing plan of the JVP.

Administration of law and order had broken down and civil administration had come to a standstill. Many civilians and police officers had been killed. Roads were blocked by the insurgents, telephone lines had been cut and telegraph posts pulled down. Public transport had been halted. As a result there was a shortage of food, petrol and oil. Insurgents looted shops and terrorised the people who lived in constant fear of their lives.

Immediate counter measures were taken by the police and the armed forces to track down and arrest the terrorists. The Police called for information from the general public about the insurgents and their hideouts and the response was encouraging. As violence spread, the military was called out and the situation worsened. Sirimavo Bandaranaike sent a distress signal to Indira Gandhi, the prime minister of India. But as the telecommunication system in Ceylon by that time had been damaged, New Delhi managed only to receive a garbled cable from the Ceylon prime minister. As assistance was not forthcoming from India, K P S Menon, of the Indian High Commission, was sent to New Delhi, to personally convey the message.

The prime minister in her broadcast to the nation on 24 April 1971 admitted that the government was not prepared to face an armed insurrection from the youth to such dynamic proportions. She admitted that the government had not taken any military precautions as government does not have adequate weapons, ammunitions and aircrafts to meet a sustained threat over a long period of time by the terrorist insurgents.

Indira Gandhi, when she received the urgent message, hurriedly summoned her cabinet to discuss the desperate appeal. Subsequently a decision was taken and five Indian frigates carried military supplies to Colombo and carried out surveillance duties off the Sri Lankan coast (in association with the miniscule Sri Lankan navy). The main task of the Indian naval force lay in preventing the seaborne supply of arms and ammunitions to the terrorist movement. Ships of the Western Fleet patrolled Sri Lanka's West Coast remaining out of sight. A frigate entered Colombo harbour to act as a communication link. Ships from Vishakhapatnam patrolled Sri Lanka's East Coast, also remaining out of sight.<sup>11</sup> In addition, India loaned six Air Force helicopters and crew for relief, rescue and other humanitarian duties. By the end of June 1971, when the JVP had suffered major losses, Indian naval force was consequently withdrawn, without any casualty.

This is an important naval operation in the sense that for the first time navy was used to support the foreign policy of India. Its silent success marked the beginning of the awareness in the Indian government of how useful the navy could be in such sensitive situations.<sup>12</sup>

### **3.1.2 Reason Behind India's Naval Support to Sri Lanka in 1971**

India provided naval help to Sri Lanka to suppress the insurgency under its foreign policy compulsion as India believed in maintaining peace and stability in its neighbourhood. President V.V. Giri in his address to the Parliament on 23 March 1971 mentioned that

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<sup>11</sup> G.H. Hiranandani, *Transition to Eminence: The Indian Navy 1976-1990* (New Delhi, 2005), p.186.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

“...India will raise its voice whenever peace is threatened, whenever the independence of sovereign nation is eroded.”<sup>13</sup> India also felt it was its moral responsibility to protect democratically elected government of Sri Lanka. India’s help to Sri Lanka in 1971 should also be seen in the perspective of India’s concern for accelerated super power naval presence in Indian Ocean. We have seen in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter that the extra regional powers particularly US tried to intervene in the region by involving itself with internal politics of the region and providing all kind of help to the smaller powers at the time of crisis or challenge. In 1971, it was quite obvious that in case India refused to provide help to Sri Lanka, it would have sought help from other powers. In such case it would not only affect India’s aspiration of becoming the regional leader but also affect its security.

### **3.1.3 Impact on India**

India’s naval support to Sri Lanka during JVP insurrection created positive result on India.

- Sri Lanka could suppress the insurgency with Indian help and thus India was able to maintain peace and stability in Sri Lanka.
- Through the naval presence India could easily convey the message that India was all ready to take action if any body tried to threaten the peace and stability of a democratic neighbour of India.
- India could show the world that it had the capability to protect its smaller neighbour.
- Immediate withdrawal of the navy from Sri Lanka after peace was restored revealed that India did not have any expansionist intention.

### **3.1.4 Ethnic Problems in Sri Lanka in the 1980s and India’s Naval Assistance**

Sri Lanka entered a critical phase owing to the fratricidal war between the government and the Tamil militants since the 1983 riots. In the 1983 riots hundreds of Tamils were

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<sup>13</sup> India, Ministry of External Affairs, *Foreign Affairs Record*- Shri S. Singh’s Statement in the Committee on Apartheid, vol.17, no.3, March 1971, pp.41-42.

killed, lakh of people were driven out of home and Tamil owned business premises and factories were burnt down. In some cities minor staff of hospitals even refused to take care of Tamil casualties. Thousand of refugees crossed over to India. No effective steps were taken by the government to suppress the riot. On the contrary the President's speech on 28 July 1983 blamed Tamil terrorist and called the Sinhala action a "people's reaction."<sup>14</sup> India urged Sri Lanka to moderate its attitude to Tamil aspirations. In 1985, India arranged an all party conference in Bhutan to discuss the possibilities to meet political and constitutional aspirations of the conflicting parties. After the failure of Thimpu talks there was intense diplomatic activity by India on Sri Lankan issue to retrieve the situation created by the Sri Lankan President backing out from the recommendations of the all party conference.<sup>15</sup> In response the Tamil militant groups particularly the LTTE became active and started a series of organised attacks and bombings in which a large number of people lost their lives.

Meanwhile the year 1985-86 saw a heightened military confrontation between the LTTE and the security forces. The LTTE continued to grow in stature and strength. Jaffna came under LTTE domination. They virtually ran a state within a state. On the other hand to retrieve control over Jaffna Sri Lankan Armed Forces (SLAF) imposed military campaign along with economic blockade on Jaffna. These development resulted change in India's policy towards Sri Lanka which included: (a) India should firmly oppose the Sri Lankan government's military operations against Tamils; (b) more direct political pressure has to be generated against Jayawerdene to implement the devolution package which had been finalized in negotiations between 1985 and 1986; (c) If India succeeded in the above two objectives, it should persuade Tamils to come back to the negotiating table; (d) if these negotiation succeeded and a set of solutions resulted from the discussions India should directly guarantee the implementation in one form or the other through appropriate agreements; and (e) India apart from being a mediator, should become the guarantor of compromises to give a tangible sense of security to Sri Lankan

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<sup>14</sup> Shankar Bhaduri, et.al, *The Sri Lankan Crisis* (New Delhi, 1990), p.16.

<sup>15</sup> Hiranandani, n.11, p.188.



Tamils and to ensure that Colombo implements the solutions agreed upon.<sup>16</sup> On 4 June 1987, India airdropped supplies over Jaffna. The Sri Lankan government called the airdropping a violation of international law. However, international concern for the people of Jaffna, and the low key response to their objections and to Sri Lankan requests for assistance, induced Sri Lanka to halt the SLAF offensive.<sup>17</sup>

Following these developments Sri Lankan Government sought discussions with India which resulted the signing of an accord between India and Sri Lanka on 29 July 1987. The Indo-Sri Lanka agreement was signed with the objective of bringing 'peace and normalcy' to Sri Lanka and to provide a political framework for the settlement of the ethnic conflict. In this agreement the Sri Lankan Government made a number of concessions to Tamil demands, which included devolution of power to the provinces, merger--subject to later referendum--of the northern and eastern provinces, and official status for the Tamil language. India on the other hand agreed to establish order in the north and east with an Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) and to cease assisting Tamil insurgents. It was also agreed that the Indian navy/ Coast guard would cooperate with the Sri Lankan Navy in preventing Tamil militant activities from affecting Sri Lanka. The navy's task was to undertake<sup>18</sup>:

- Joint naval patrols of Sri Lankan waters to prevent movement of arms and militants across the water in and out of Sri Lanka.
- Joint army- navy operations to combat militant activity.
- Logistic support for the build up and maintenance of the IPKF in Sri Lanka.
- General operations to support the Accord, like transfer of refugees.

The signing of the accord was followed by violent upheavals in Sri Lanka by the JVP. Sri Lanka immediately sought India's military assistance to stabilize the situation and safeguard Sri Lanka's unity and territorial integrity. Accordingly in the early hours of

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<sup>16</sup> J.N. Dixit, *Assignment Colombo* (Delhi, 1998), p.332.

<sup>17</sup> Hiranandani, n.11, p.189.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p.192.

30<sup>th</sup> July 1987, the navy commenced the induction of the IPKF into Sri Lanka and thus started its mission in Sri Lanka. This naval mission was known as Operation Pawan. A rapid build up followed after 30<sup>th</sup> July. A sea-borne logistic support chain was established with Madras. Merchant ships were chartered for troop and cargo transshipment. Amphibious Landing ships ferried personnel and stores into the uncharted KKS Harbour and across uncharted beaches. By 15 August 1987, the Joint Indian–Sri Lankan naval patrol had been instituted in the Palk Bay to sever the LTTE conduit between Sri Lanka’s northern Jaffna peninsula and the southern coast of Tamil Nadu. The disused airfield at Ramnad was activated for air surveillance of the Palk Bay, using Naval Islander aircraft and Chetak Helicopter for daylight surveillance. Indian Naval Liaison Teams (INLTs) were positioned at four locations in Sri Lanka- Trincomalee, Pallaly, Kankesanturai and Karainagar. The Indian Marine Special Force (IMSF), a newly formed commando arm of the navy, was also deployed in August 1987. A 40-strong group ‘Marine Commandos’ (MARCOS) participated in 55 combat operations in its very first year. During their raids, they destroyed LTTE boats, ammunition, warehouses and militant camps.

On 7 October 1987 A Cordon militaire was established across a 310- mile belt to disarm the LTTE. It extended northwards from Talaimannar through the Palk Strait and along the East coast of Sri Lanka until its southern limit at little Basses island. The Cordon militaire effectively sanitized the offshore areas through intensive air and surface patrolling. On a daily average, the navy and coast guard deployed four major warships and eight smaller patrol craft, while the Sri Lankan navy provided five to six patrol craft. Naval air surveillance over the sea was mounted daily from various bases – Madras by F-27s, Madurai by armed Alizes, Ramnad by Islanders and armed Chetaks and Batticaloa by armed helicopters, which functioned as a Quick Reaction Force (QRF). In January 1988, the Navy instituted a special force of 15 ‘armed trawlers’, which operated from Rameshwaram. This helped to seal the LTTE’s Dhanushkodi- Talaimannar conduit.<sup>19</sup>

In November 1988, the Presidential elections in Sri Lanka posed a new

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p.194.

contingency-the safety of President Jayewardene in case his party lost the election. As a precautionary measure, Operation Jupiter was planned to evacuate the President and his immediate family to safety. The navy positioned at Tuticorin a seaking capable frigate, INS Godavari (and later INS Taragiri) with an IMSF team embarked. As it happened, the President's party was re elected.

When Mr. Jayewardene's term expired in January 1989, Mr. Premadasa became the President of Sri Lanka. Being a staunch critic of Indo- Sri Lanka Accord, he served the Indian Government with an ultimatum to withdraw the IPKF by 29 July 1989. Political interaction between the two governments had defused the crisis and the contingency plans were deactivated by mid August 1989. De-induction of the IPKF started in August 1989. Operation Pawan was terminated on 24 March 1990, when the final contingent of the IPKF sailed out of Trincomalee port.

After the withdrawal of the IPKF from Sri Lanka in April 1990, the protection of the Tamil Nadu coast was entrusted to the Navy and the Coast Guard. Operation Tasha commenced in June 1990 to continuously patrol the International Boundary line in the Palk Strait to curb the smuggling of arms and ammunitions, poaching, illegal immigration and activities of Sri Lankan Tamil militants. The hiring of trawlers and arming them with MMGs for operating from the naval detachments at Rameshwaram and Nagapatnam was institutionalized. The earlier adhoc facilities for operating aircraft and helicopters from the naval Air Detachment Ramnad were gradually improved. Logistic and maintenance infrastructure and maintenance personnel were established at Madras to sustain the shallow draught ships patrolling the Palk Strait.

### **3.1.5 Reasons Behind India's support to Sri Lanka in 1987**

India sent its troop to Sri Lanka in 1987 not only to provide help to a friendly country or to maintain peace and stability in that country. Maintaining peace and stability was of course one of the motives but there are some other compulsion also. "The political situation in Sri Lanka in 1980s was causing concern in India. The refugee influx into the

Indian state of Tamil Nadu was not only proving to be a financial burden on India but was also; understandably, inflaming Tamil passions as stories of state repression and atrocities gathered momentum in India.”<sup>20</sup> Political parties in Tamil Nadu were sympathetic to the aspirations of Sri Lankan Tamils. They were putting pressure on Indian government to pressure Sri Lankan government to fulfill the aspirations of the Tamils. India could not ignore the concern of Tamil Nadu as they have already threatened earlier to secede from India when attempts were made to impose Hindi as a compulsory national and official language of India.<sup>21</sup> Sri Lanka’s geographical proximity with India and the deep socio- cultural link between Sri Lankan Tamils and Indian Tamils which compelled India to perceive critical developments in Sri Lanka not purely as the internal affair of a neighbour but as an issue which could affect India’s own unity and territorial integrity if India did not respect the sentiment of its own Tamil citizens.<sup>22</sup>

India’s another concern was the presence of extra regional power. When Sri Lanka realised that it could not contain Tamil militancy it started looking for external support and signed informal, confidential agreements with the USA and Britain to bring their warship into Colombo, Trincomalee and the Gulf of Mannar. It also invited British mercenaries, Israeli intelligence agencies and sought assistance from Pakistan to train its Home guards and navy. It was reported that Sri Lanka authorised the Voice of America (VOA) broadcasting against the Soviet Union and offered the USA naval facilities at Trincomalee. This development changed India’s Sri Lankan Policy. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi told Indian ambassador to Sri Lanka that till 1985, India’s Sri Lankan policy was influenced by Tamil Nadu politics and ethno-religious consideration, but it would henceforth be “an Indian policy responsive to India’s security and strategic interests and responsive to the principle of not disrupting the territorial integrity of a small neighbour. Within this overall framework, India’s endeavour would be to ensure the maximum fulfillment of legitimate Tamil aspirations.”<sup>23</sup> Jayewardene’s structuring international equations which could potentially be a strategic challenge to Indian security made India

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<sup>20</sup> Depinder Singh, *IPKF in Sri Lanka* (Noida, 1989), p.207.

<sup>21</sup> Dixit, n.16, p.14.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

<sup>23</sup> Dixit, n.16, p.4.

perceive Sri Lankan developments as a critically embryonic regional crisis that called for some decisive action by India.<sup>24</sup>

### **3.1.6 Impact on India**

- Withdrawal of IPKF brought a bad name to India. For many it was a failure of diplomacy. Though India sent the IPKF to stop war and to restore peace and stability in Sri Lanka, ultimately it ended with fighting with the LTTE.
- It was criticized as an act of unwarranted intrusion into a small neighbouring country aimed at imposing Indian hegemony on South Asia.
- The accord was vehemently criticized by the Tamils as the hopes of Eelam had receded by India's support for a united Sri Lanka. They felt that India was no longer interested in ensuring the security of the Tamils and was supporting Jayewardene for other motives, perhaps in a singular pursuit of regional super power status for India. It was also thought that India was attempting to establish a kind of colonial hold over Tamil areas of Sri Lanka. These kind of bitter feelings ultimately resulted confrontation between the LTTE and the IPKF.<sup>25</sup>
- India's involvement in Sri Lanka resulted assassination of then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
- There was tremendous opposition to the presence of Indian troops in Sri Lanka. The clauses of the agreement pertaining to Trincomalee which gave India a decisive say as to who could establish a military base or naval facilities was seen as a major curtailment of Sri Lanka's sovereign rights. India's motives were suspected as the idea of Provincial Councils was mainly seen as a handle to achieve Eelam.<sup>26</sup>
- Many people felt that India was assuming the role of a self appointed mediator and interventionist in Sri Lankan Affairs.
- IPKF could not get the LTTE to agree to surrender all its arms.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p.17.

<sup>25</sup> Bhaduri, n.14, pp.25-26.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp.26-27.

- India's credibility as a mediator and as a regional power capable of controlling critical developments and stabilizing the situation suffered seriously in the region and in the world at large.

However, it would be wrong to say that IPKF was total failure. It must be accepted that the presence of IPKF in Sri Lanka enabled the Jayewardene Govt. to control JVP violence in the remaining parts of Sri Lanka. If the IPKF had not been there, Jayewardene would have been overthrown, even assassinated, Sri Lanka would have been bifurcated on Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic lines, the Sinhalese portions being dominated by the JVP. In retrospect Sri Lanka survives as a united democratic country because of the thankless but important task taken on by the IPKF under directives from the Rajiv Gandhi government.<sup>27</sup> By signing the Indo-Sri Lanka accord India could manage to free Trincomalee or other Sri Lankan port from military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India's interest.

### **3.2 Coup Attempt in Maldives and India's Naval Assistance**

Maldives faced a serious security challenge on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1988, when a group of sea borne mercenaries invaded Male with the aim of overthrowing Gayoom regime. Indian navy successfully thwarted this coup attempt within a very short period of time.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1988, two Colombo based dissident businessmen from the Maldives, Abdullah Luthfi and Sagar Nasir, along with about 300/500 Tamil/Sinhala speaking mercenaries attempted to overthrow the Gayoom regime. The Tamil mercenaries were former members of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE). As the LTTE (Liberation Tamil Tigers Eelam) was beginning to dominate the local scene in Eelam in Sri Lanka and were militarily much stronger, PLOTE decided to capture the islands of Maldive and conduct their campaign from there, because the central location of the island nation of the Maldives in the western Indian

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<sup>27</sup> Dixit, n.16, p.4.

Ocean, appeared to provide an ideal staging post for illicit arms shipments to the PLOTE in Sri Lanka.<sup>28</sup>

The coup attempt appears to have been amateurishly planned as instead of destroying the central communication network or blocking the airport runway, the mercenaries concentrated on capturing the Maldivian president- Gayoom. They stormed the presidential house. However during this attempted coup, Maldivian President Gayoom went into hiding. Having failed to find him at his official residence, they launched a direct attack on the heavily fortified headquarters of the National Security Service (NSS), where he had taken refuge. This attack was carried out by machine guns and other light arms, but failed to cut off the country's telecommunication links with the outside world. Without losing any time President sought India's help and immediate intervention. It is important to mention here that during this period, the Maldivian authorities were also in touch with the governments of the United States, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Pakistan and Singapore to send general appeal for help.<sup>29</sup> But Maldives President disclosed that he had asked for military assistance only from India and from no other country.<sup>30</sup> Now there may be three possible reasons behind President Gayoom's decision to seek military assistance only from India. Firstly its geographical proximity with India, secondly, identity of belonging to the same region, thirdly, power and capability of India, fourthly, good will and understanding that existed between India and Maldives and finally to prevent involvement of extra regional powers in the region.<sup>31</sup> Maldives also sought other powers help to drive the point that Maldives is not entirely dependent on India alone but the entire world community to foil the coup.<sup>32</sup>

To consider action on President Gayoom's appeal for military intervention Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi cancelled his scheduled visit to Bihar and convened a meeting of the cabinet committee on political affairs.<sup>33</sup> Soon after the cabinet decision to intervene

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<sup>28</sup> <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/LAND-FORCES/Army/History/1970s/Operation-Cactus.html>

<sup>29</sup> Sahadevan, n.4, pp.104.

<sup>30</sup> Times of India (New Delhi), 7 November 1988.

<sup>31</sup> Sahadevan, n.4, p.104.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 4 November 1988.

with armed forces, Indian military began its operation in Maldives code named as Operation Cactus at 1300 hrs on 3 November 1988. It involved units of the Indian army, navy and air force, which operated in a joint manner, though not under a temporary joint command.<sup>34</sup> The army/air force concept of operation was to affect an air landing / para drop at Hulule airport, establish a bridgehead and thereafter secure control of the island of Male where the Maldivian government was located. The Navy's task was to establish a cordon sanitaire for which naval Maritime Reconnaissance (MR) aircraft and ships were deployed around the Maldivian Islands.<sup>35</sup> At sea, the nearest ships to the Maldives- the cadet training ship Tir and the frigate Godavari were diverted towards Male at maximum speed. Betwa was sailed from Cochin. Rajput, Ranjit, Gomati, trishul, Nilgiri, Kumbhir, Cheetah and the fleet tanker Deepak were directed to prepare to sail for the Maldives and MR aircraft were launched for air Patrols.

A naval Tupolev Tu-142 MR plane was sent to ensure the runway at Hulule airport was not blocked. Once this was confirmed two Indian Air Force II-76 transport aircrafts carrying 300 paratroopers of the elite 50<sup>th</sup> independent Parachute Brigade, landed at Hulule airport at night of 3 /4 November. When the mercenaries heard aircraft landing, they seized 27 hostages (which included the Maldivian Minister of Transport) and fled from Male in a 5000 tonne Maldivian registered merchant ship MV Progress Light. Progress Light was commandeered by a group of 46 mercenaries. Throughout the night, MR aircraft kept track on radar of all ships in the patrol area. At 0925 hrs on the morning of 4<sup>th</sup> November, the MR aircraft confirmed the detection of the progress light and homed Betwa towards it. Betwa intercepted Progress Light on the night of the 4 /5 and followed it. In the meantime, Godavari's Seaking helicopter embarked a negotiating team in Colombo to negotiate with the mercenaries for the release of the hostages. Negotiation started by midday on the 5<sup>th</sup> November. After 15 hrs of tension packed dialogue between the negotiators and the mercenaries, it was clear that the rebels were not prepared to negotiate. The leader of the mercenaries insisted that the Progress Light would proceed only to Colombo and demanded intervention by an international team.

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<sup>34</sup> Rahul Roy Chaudhury, *Seapowe and Indian Security* (London, 1995), p.141.

<sup>35</sup> Hiranandani, n.11, p.199.



During the negotiation the ship continued to head for Colombo. The Maldivian government had made it clear that the Progress Light should not be allowed to proceed to Colombo.

Meanwhile the Sri Lankan Government had also intimated that the rebel ship would not be allowed to enter Sri Lankan waters and that if it did, it would be attacked. Progress Light was given the choice of returning to Male or heading for an Indian air port. The mercenaries refused it and changed their destination. Godavari was directed to initiate graded pressure tactics and stop Progress Light. A warning shot was fired across the bows, but failed to persuade the hijackers. Close range gunfire was aimed at the forward goal post mast. It dislodged the swinging derrick which fell on top of their fast speed escape craft. After dawn on the 6<sup>th</sup>, Godavari's Seaking dropped two depth charges ahead of the bows. Close range gunfire was aimed at the aft mast and funnel. At 0825 hrs, a frantic report from the Master of the Progress Light indicated that the rebels had surrendered. The ship however continued to move ahead. Betwa then opened fire. One of her shells hit Progress Light amidships and finally she stopped.<sup>36</sup> The mercenaries surrendered at 0845 hrs on 6<sup>th</sup> November. A naval boarding party seized the ship, brought the hostages to Godavari and apprehended the mercenaries. Progress Light capsized at 0530 hrs on 7 November, 56 miles South West of Colombo. Eight hostages were badly injured in the process. They were immediately evacuated by Helicopter to the military hospital, Trivandrum for urgent hospitalization and the hostages with minor injuries were treated on board Godavari. The salvage parties from Betwa tried to extinguish fire and control the flooding on board Progress light, but were unsuccessful due to the adverse weather condition. The crew of Progress Light was then transferred to Betwa. Godavari and Betwa proceeded to Male with the rescued hostages, captured mercenaries and the crew of MV Progress Light and on 8 November, at a formal ceremony, Indian naval officer handed over the rescued hostages to the Maldivian Government officials. On 9 November the captured mercenaries were taken to Indian army detention camp at Gamadoo Island by Godavari. The attempted coup was thus suppressed successfully.

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<sup>36</sup> "Statement of Vice Admiral SV Gopalachari, Captain and Commanding Officer of the Godavari", Hiranandani, n.11, p.200.

### **3.2.2 Reasons Behind India's Support to the Maldives**

Like the Sri Lankan case, India's naval support to Maldives too must be seen in the perspective of Indo-Maldives relations and as the response to India's regional security policy. Indo- Maldives relations are marked by friendship and cooperation. The Indo – Maldives relationship is free from any kind of bilateral problems. The only problem recorded was over the issue of Minicoy islands, when during the 1982 Independence Day celebrations President Gayoom's brother Abdullah Hameed declared it as part of Maldives. Soon afterwards, the President had to clarify that the reference was to affirm the religious, linguistic and cultural affinity between the Maldives and Minicoy, and that the Maldives was not laying any political claims on the Indian islands.<sup>37</sup> Thus the problem was solved. According to Dr. P. Sahadevan, India-Maldives relations are devoid of any bilateral irritants mainly because of three reasons: Firstly, the relationship is “neither complex nor unreasonably demanding on each other”, secondly, India-Maldives relations have remained free of colonial influence, and thirdly, Maldives does not live politically in the shadow of India, and, as such, the internal political forces in both the countries do not influence the tone and tenor of their bilateral relations.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, both the countries have mutual interests on each other. Maldives is situated about 450 miles westward of Sri Lanka and its northernmost tip is nearly 300 miles away from the Southern coastline of India. Its Gan Island is located just 240 miles off Diego Garcia, where the Americans have established an air and naval base. This Gan Island has got strategic importance too. Britain had an airfield and naval base on Gan Island. They have been using Gan as a staging post. But when they decided to withdraw from the Gan Island, various countries including the two super powers were eyeing it to establish a base. It makes Maldives vulnerable. Absence of a required military strength to protect its security made Maldives to consider India as an important source for its security. India has also provided a variety of assistance and played a greater role in infrastructure development in Maldives.

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<sup>37</sup> Ravinatha Aryasinha, “Maldives, Sri Lanka and India Factor”, *Himal* (Chitwan District), vol.10, no.2, March-April 1997, p.27.

<sup>38</sup> Sahadevan, n.4, pp.99-100.

India's interest on Maldives on the other hand must be seen in the perspective of its foreign policy which aims at preventing external presence in the region. It is in the pursuance of this aim India has been rallying the support of Maldives as Maldives also opposed presence of external power in the region. In this context it would be appropriate to mention that both India and Maldives held same view on the concept of Indian Ocean as A Zone of Peace. Thus their relations are guided by the principle of beneficial bilateralism, mutual appreciation of concerns and interest by the two countries, and equal respect and sympathy for each other's sensitivities.<sup>39</sup> It is quite surprising that the largest and the smallest country of the region are having such a good neighbourly relations. It is quite unusual that despite of being such a small country Maldives does not sense any fear from India. It is mainly because India had always assured Maldives that their relations would be based on equality and mutual respect for their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Maldives is not afflicted with the "big power versus small power syndrome". In fact, Maldives has maintained that India is the natural leader of the region. It is evident from Gayoom's statement during Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Male in February 1986: "Although the seven members of the SAARC have equal status, we believe that India, with the vast human and material resources at its command, has a substantial role to play in achieving the aims and objectives of our association".<sup>40</sup> India felt it is necessary to help such a friendly country during security challenge.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi gave the specific reasons for responding to Mr. Gayoom's request for troops. He stated:

Maldives is a peaceful country with no armed forces except a small force to maintain law and order. President Gayoom is the democratically elected and popular president of this friendly neighbour of ours. He was reelected for a third term in office as recently as September 23 1988, securing over 95% of the votes polled. Maldives is also one of closest and friendliest neighbours. It appealed to us in desperation in its grave hours of need.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p.97.

<sup>40</sup> *Asia Year Book 1987*, (Hongkong, 1987), p.195.

<sup>41</sup> Times of India, 5 November 1988.

He further stated:

...(T)his was yet another manifestation of India's commitment to peace and stability in the region and to solving problems "among ourselves without outside interference."<sup>42</sup>

Prime Minister's statement makes it very clear that India found it as its moral responsibility to protect a friendly, non-aligned, democratic and vulnerable country like Maldives during security challenges. In fact it is not only India's moral responsibility; it should also be viewed in the perspective of its foreign policy. It manifests India's commitment to protect democracy and sovereignty whenever it is threatened and the promotion of peace and stability in the region. It also becomes clear that India's help to Maldives during coup attempt in 1988 was to a greater extent guided by its interest to keep the external powers out of the region and play the role of a security manager.<sup>43</sup>

### **3.2.3 Impact on India**

Though the international community praised the swift success of the Operation Cactus and the prompt withdrawal of all the Indian troops except a small contingent numbering 160 men (who were retained at the request of the Maldivian government till the completion of the trail of the mercenaries), most of the opposition parties at home were not very enthusiastic about India's intervention. Mr. V. Gopalaswamy (DMK) and many others from opposition party compared this operation with that of the IPKF in Sri Lanka, which they considered as a great mistake and therefore demanded a definite policy of Indian government on military intervention.<sup>44</sup> It is important to note here that before criticizing and comparing Operation Cactus with the IPKF, one should analyse the situation carefully. The political situation and nature of challenge were vastly different in the two countries.

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<sup>42</sup> Times of India, 5 November 1988.

<sup>43</sup> Sahadevan, n.4, pp.105.

<sup>44</sup> Statesman (New Delhi), 5 November 1988.

However at international level it did not raise any controversy. On the contrary India's prompt action to safeguard Maldives' sovereignty was appreciated. It left a strong print of India's friendship on the Maldivian mind. President Gayoom not only lavishly expressed his deep appreciation and gratitude for India's timely military assistance, but also rejected the general perception among other neighbours that India had hegemonic ambitions or designs in the region. He held the view that Maldives had nothing to fear from India.<sup>45</sup> Maldives ambassador to the US Mr. Hussain Manikufan in a news conference at the UN headquarter voiced his countries deep appreciation for India's military assistance.<sup>46</sup> United States, United Kingdom and the UN Special Political Committee praised India's role in putting down the abortive coup in Maldives. Operation Cactus has enhanced India's image and reputation. US's endorsement to India's decision to military intervention affirms that US genuinely accepts that New Delhi is entitled to intervene in the region in the interest of order and stability. Its timely withdrawal from Maldives proved that India's intervention was not to secure a base in Maldives and it does not have any hegemonistic intention.

### **3.3 Conclusion**

The aforesaid discussion shows that Indian navy played important role to support and implement India's policy towards its neighbors. In all the abovementioned cases navy was not used for military purpose but for political purpose. Now the question is how far Indian navy was successful in performing its political role. It can be said that in Maldives and in Sri Lanka in 1971, navy performed its role very efficiently and could achieve the desired results. But in Sri Lanka in 1987 though navy performed its duty perfectly and could achieve some desired results, yet it is characterized by failure of diplomacy. In this context it would be appropriate to mention that success of naval diplomacy depends upon the perception of others and how others view it. A prolong naval presence at times may create negative attitude and seen as a threat. Exactly the same thing happened with Sri

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<sup>45</sup> Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, *News Review on South Asia, December 1989* (New Delhi, 1989), p.1080.

<sup>46</sup> Times of India, 9 November 1988.

Lanka. We have already seen that generally Sri Lanka perceives India as a threat which is actually an imaginary threat. On the other hand Maldives did not view India's presence a threat and cooperate with India to successfully complete its missions in Sri Lanka.

## *Chapter 4*

## **INDIA'S HUMANITARIAN NAVAL ASSISTANCE**

Humanitarian Assistance refers to helping out a country that has a special need caused by poverty, underdevelopment, natural disasters, armed conflicts, etc. The objectives of humanitarian action are to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and in the aftermath of man-made crises and natural disasters, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for the occurrence of such situations.<sup>1</sup> The biggest humanitarian assistance in the South Asian region till now is Tsunami Relief Operations in 2004-05.

On 26 December 2004, Indian Ocean earthquake, known by the scientific community as the Sumatra-Andaman earthquake, triggered a series of lethal tsunamis that spread throughout the Indian Ocean,<sup>2</sup> killing large numbers of people in India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Indonesia and Thailand. The casualties of 26 December 2004 tsunami is 229,886, out of which 186,983 are dead and 42,883 are missing. Among the South Asian countries the worst affected country is Sri Lanka followed by India and Maldives. Though India itself was affected seriously by the lethal tsunami, it undertook a massive relief operation in Sri Lanka, Maldives and Indonesia. Now the question arises why did India provide humanitarian assistance to its neighbours. What is the role of Indian Navy in the relief operations? How far Indian Navy was successful in these missions? What is the impact of humanitarian naval assistance on India?

### **4.1 Effect of Tsunami in Sri Lanka**

Affects of tsunami had been severe in Sri Lanka. 13 Districts in the five Provinces of Sri Lanka have been affected by the tsunami on 26 December 2004. Those districts are: Southern Province: Galle, Matara, Hambantota; Western Province: Kalutara, Gampaha, Colombo; Eastern Province: Ampara, Batticaloa, Trincomalee; Northern Province:

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<sup>1</sup> "International Meeting on Good Humanitarian Donorship, Stockholm", 16-17 June 2003, <http://www.reliefweb.int/ghd/Stockholm%20-%20GHD%20Principles%20and%20IP.doc>.

<sup>2</sup> See appendix 4, pp.



Jaffna, Mullativu, Killinochchi; North Western Province: Puttalam.<sup>3</sup> Out of these the south and east coasts were worst hit. Thousands of people died, million of people have been displaced from their homes. About 1,200 dead were counted at Batticaloa in the east. At Trincomalee in the northeast, where the tsunami reached more than 2 km inland, 800 were reported dead. In Amparai district alone, more than 5,000 are dead. The naval base at Trincomalee is reported to be submerged. About 1000 more dead were counted in Mullaitivu and Vadamadachi East. A train, the "Sea Queen", running between Colombo and Galle, with 1,600 passengers was struck by the tsunami, killing all but 300 on board. The agricultural sector has been affected seriously. 2.59 km<sup>2</sup> of paddy land has been destroyed in the northern, eastern, southern and western coastal belt. In addition, the extensive salinisation of paddy lands has rendered them unsuitable for paddy cultivation. Rubbish has also been deposited on paddy lands. A large number of agricultural vehicles and equipment have been destroyed and canals and drains have been blocked. Underground sources of water have also been salinated. Apart from homes, many hotels were also reported to have been damaged.<sup>4</sup>

#### **4.2 Effect of Tsunami in the Maldives**

The 26 December 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami caused considerable damage within the Maldives too though, compared to the Eastern Indian Ocean, impact of tsunami on Maldives was considerably less. Nevertheless, the tsunami impact was both widespread and destructive to: the natural environment (rocks, beaches, etc), vegetation, man-made structures, and the island residents. The most obvious tsunami damage was to the vegetation. The salt water flooding killed the fruit trees and the tsunami inundation tore out coastal trees. Inland vegetation was stripped of leaves and killed or damaged by the salt water. Coconuts washed off the islands and floating trees from elsewhere that washed

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<sup>3</sup> "Census of Persons, Housing Units and Other Buildings Affected by Tsunami", 26th December 2004, [http://www.statistics.gov.lk/Tsunami/census/intro\\_census.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.lk/Tsunami/census/intro_census.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> "Effect of the 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake on Sri Lanka", [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004\\_Indian\\_ocean\\_earthquake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004_Indian_ocean_earthquake).

into the lagoon have proven to be hazards to navigation, particularly to the high-speed boats used to deliver guests to resort islands.

In addition, the location of garbage dumps on the seaward side of the island resulted in the spread of debris that polluted the ground surface and ground water as a direct result of the tsunami. The coincidence of the tsunami arriving at the Maldivian Islands at low tide, during daylight hours, the variability of the wave height, and the resourcefulness of the local people contributed to the low numbers of fatalities. It caused death of 81 people. Most residents faced drowning. Many residents were washed from the islands and fortunately rescued at sea. The homes and businesses of many islanders were destroyed, as well as their jobs. In many cases all their belongings were destroyed. The tsunami damage to buildings varied according to location of the island relative to the exterior atoll ring reef and according to the location on the island. The tsunami totally destroyed concrete block buildings adjacent to the coast of the eastern side of Guraidhoo and Maafushi Islands.<sup>5</sup>

### **4.3 India's Naval Assistance to Sri Lanka and the Maldives**

India was among the first countries to contribute to international relief efforts. With confidence in its capabilities of dealing with this disaster, India was able to move very quickly to extend timely assistance to other more affected countries, in particular, of course, to its nearest neighbours Sri Lanka and the Maldives.<sup>6</sup> The Indian Navy along with the Air Force, Coast Guard and Central Paramilitary force played a heroic role in the tsunami relief operation.

#### **4.3.1 Tsunami Relief to Sri Lanka**

Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh announced within hours tsunami occurred that India would assist Sri Lanka in relief and rehabilitation efforts. Accordingly, the Navy launched "Operation Rainbow" on the day itself. The first Indian naval Dornier carrying

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<sup>5</sup> Barbara H. Keating, et.al., "2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami on Maldivian Islands: Initial Observations", Science of Tsunami Hazards (Australia), vol.23, no.2., 2005, p.20.

<sup>6</sup> Bridging the Ocean: India Leads Relief Measures in Tsunami Hit Areas, <http://www.mea.gov.in>.

650 kg of medical supplies and a medical team arrived on December 26 itself. Almost simultaneously, four Indian naval ships with as many helicopters on board were directed to steam immediately to the ports of Galle and Trincomalee. These vessels, which picked up relief supplies on the way, reached Sri Lanka in a little over 24 hours. These ships were the first to reach Sri Lanka and immediately commenced relief and damage control operations. Thus by 30 December 2004, India sent four ships loads of relief supplies, rescue and relief workers including scuba divers for salvage operations. 30 tons of relief goods were sent to Trincomalee by INS Sukanya and Sandhayak and 22 tons of relief supplies by INS Sutlej and Sharda to Galle on 27 December. Again on 31 December 20 tons of relief supplies by INS Kirch and 50 gen sets were sent to Trincomalee. On the same day 1000 kg of relief goods were carried by INS Aditya to Colombo. On 1 January 82 tons of relief goods and rations were sent to Trincomalee by INS Ghorpad and 1500 kg of relief goods by CGS Samar to Colombo on 2 January 2005. The INS Sutlej and INS Sarveekhak operated two medical camps in Galle. Two medical officers and medical assistants from INS Kirch at Trincomalee were deployed at Kinniya in Trincomalee District. Six Medical Officers and 12 medical assistants from INS Aditya, and an Indian Naval tanker were deployed in Batticaloa with the army bridge HQ.

Subsequently Indian deployment for relief efforts consisted of stationing an air detachment of 10 aircraft for three weeks, about 15 naval ship-loads of supplies, fifteen medical teams including a mobile field hospital (140 men) that was airlifted and specialist doctors, a 45-bed hospital ship (INS Jamuna) that was anchored off Galle and Trincomalee for two weeks, 10 teams of naval divers and a 81-member composite Army disaster management team. Ten truckloads of supplies donated by CII were also handed over to the Ramakrishna Mission in Point Pedro in northern Sri Lanka. The teams, aircraft and vessels provided immediate assistance in search and rescue, transport, damage assessment operations, salvage and debris clearance in the harbours of Galle and Trincomalee, emergency medical services and in the initial confusion among administrative authorities in Sri Lanka functioned as temporary command centers.<sup>7</sup> Prime

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<sup>7</sup> "Tsunami Relief Management", <http://www.mea.gov.in>.

Minister Manmohan Singh also announced Rs. 100 crore relief package to Sri Lanka.

#### **4.3.2 Tsunami Relief to the Maldives**

Within a short period of time India launched “Operation Castor” in Maldives to provide relief to the tsunami affected people. Accordingly, three ships were diverted to Male. The INS Mysore, a destroyer, reached there on 28 December and two other ships, INS Udaygiri and INS Aditya went there on 29 December 2004. All these ships had integral helicopter capability and were able to provide support from the air as well. These ships carried medicines, medical teams, water and water purification equipment. Two Indian naval ships have set up medical camps in the Maldives. The Indian Navy is also running four medical camps at various locations and has treated about a thousand persons. The Indian Navy has also deployed four ships along with four helicopters for ferrying supplies and providing assistance. The embarked helicopters have flown several sorties to lift supplies to outlying islands and have evacuated 15 medical casualties. An Indian Coast Guard Dornier aircraft also transported a medical team, 1000 kg of food provisions and medicines from Male to Kadhdou Islands - about 139 mile from Male- on 27 December 2004. The four aircraft that carried supplies to the Maldives were stationed there to assist with rescue and relief operations. The Indian naval ships and aircraft have also been tasked for ferrying approximately 200 tonnes of relief supplies received from international aid agencies from the Hulule airport to various outlying islands. Diving ships have provided assistance to the Maldives Government for clearing obstructions along the coast. In addition, naval ships and coast guard ships have repaired the generators and operationalised power supply in seven islands. A naval tanker with drinking water and a water purification plant is also in place. A maritime coordination centre has been established at Male to coordinate the relief effort with the Maldives Government.<sup>8</sup> Other than these Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also announced Rs. 5 crore packages to Maldives.

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<sup>8</sup> Bridging the Ocean: India Leads Relief Measures in Tsunami Hit Areas, <http://www.mca.gov.in>.

#### **4.4 Reasons Behind India's Naval Support to Sri Lanka and the Maldives**

Surprisingly to the world community, though India itself was severely hit by tsunami, it provided immediate assistance to Sri Lanka and Maldives. The tsunami hit the southern and eastern coastal areas of India and penetrated inland up to 3 kms, causing extensive damage in the Union Territory of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, and the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu and the Union Territory of Pondicherry. About 2,260 km of the coastal area besides the Andaman & Nicobar Islands were affected. Total 27.92 lakh people were affected in India, out of which 12405 were dead. 75% of the dead were women and children.<sup>9</sup> 1089 villages in India are affected badly. Coastal fisheries and agriculture were the worst affected economic activities. Apart from the loss of human life among the fisherfolk, fishing boats, nets, etc. have been extensively damaged. Moreover, fishing harbors and landing centers also suffered heavy damage. Officials estimate that only three of 15,000 fishing vessels along the stretch of Tamil Nadu coastline escaped damage. Total 83,788 boats were damaged in India.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, social infrastructure of schools, primary health centres, drinking water supply, community centres for women and children and other community assets, harbours, jetties, roads and bridges were destroyed. In the mainland states it was reported that 162 km of national highways, 462 km of state/district highways, 14 bridges, 78 culverts and a huge number of private homes and government buildings had been damaged. In monetary terms the damage was estimated at about Rs. 11544.91 Crore.<sup>11</sup>

Despite of these heavy damages India responded to this crisis immediately not only within its territory but also to the neighbouring states particularly Sri Lanka and Maldives. Now the question is, why did India provide assistance to its neighbours when India itself was affected so badly and thus had to undertake a massive relief effort within the country itself.

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<sup>9</sup> Raman Puri, "Tsunami Relief Operations by Indian Armed Forces", Journal of United Service Institution of India (New Delhi), vol. C35, no.560, April-June 2005, pp.200-14.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

According to the official source, India's main motive behind rescue and relief operations in Sri Lanka and Maldives was to help the friendly neighbours at the time of need. India did it as good neighbourly device. In an interview with OUTLOOK then External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh said:

It's true that India has also been a victim of the tsunami, and a huge operation has been launched for relief and rehabilitation within India. At the same time, given our place in this region, and our resources and expertise in providing relief after natural disasters, it was natural that we should try and help these friendly countries in this hour of need. It's important that countries join hands in the face of such enormous disaster and try to alleviate the suffering of their people which, after all, is the common suffering of mankind.<sup>12</sup>

It is quite obvious from the statement that India looks itself as the regional power which has the resources and expertise to provide relief after such catastrophe. Other than the resources and expertise, we must consider the geographical proximity between India and these countries (Sri Lanka and the Maldives). Therefore, India considered it as its moral responsibility to help its neighbours in such hours. In K. Natwar Singh's words: "As a responsible member of the international community, it is also our duty to help friendly countries, especially those in our neighbourhood, in their times of difficulty to the extent possible."<sup>13</sup>

According to some analysts, India's quick response to Sri Lanka was motivated by the presence of large number of U. S. Naval ship in Sri Lankan coast. In all about 20 U.S. military ships and more than 10,000 Marines and sailors have been mobilized for the relief operation in the Indian Ocean Region. This is the largest U.S. military concentration in Asia since the Vietnam War ended in 1975.<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that though India had initially problems with presence of such huge number of military ships in the region, it would be wrong to say that India's quick response to Sri Lanka was guided by US military presence. India provided its naval assistance to Sri Lanka on the

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<sup>12</sup> Interview with External Affairs Minister, Natwar Singh to Outlook, Jan 24, 2005, write publication and entire date.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> R Hariharan, "Tsunami: Security Implications In Sri Lanka", South Asia Analysis Group, Paper no.1213, <http://www.saag.org/papers13/paper1213.html>.

same day the tragic tsunami occurred; whereas US responded after two days. Then External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh mentioned in an interview with OUTLOOK that in this kind of crisis smaller countries like Sri Lanka need help and India does not have any problem if the US helps Sri Lanka, but that has to be done with the consultation and coordination with the Coordination group for tsunami relief effort. In his words:

The magnitude of the disaster in Sri Lanka is such that it requires huge assistance. Indians are already present there in fairly large strength for providing relief. If the US believes it can contribute to that effort, they are most welcome. Of course, coordination has to be ensured and this was done through the coordination group that was set up. The extent of American support required is something that can be determined on the basis of consultation.<sup>15</sup>

If we observe the first three lines carefully we will see that India feels if the US wants to contribute it can, otherwise presence of India's large strength in Sri Lanka is fair enough to provide relief in Sri Lanka. It is also quite obvious from the last line that Sri Lanka should have consulted India before allowing such huge number of the US military ships in the region. It shows India's big brotherly attitude towards its neighbours. Though in the post cold war period India has given up its "Monroe Doctrine policy" and wants to cooperate with other powers yet it wants to keep its sphere of influence intact in the region.

It was also said that relief assistance provided India a great opportunity to project its power and capacity to claim permanent seat in the Security Council. It can not be said that it was the prime reason behind India's naval assistance in Sri Lanka and Maldives, though indirectly India wanted to project its power.

All the official sources have denied that there was any strategic reason behind India's naval assistance to the neighbours. There is no doubt that India does have strategic interest in the region, but image of India and strategic issues were not the considerations when India took the decision. India's main concern was to provide assistance to rescue and relief people in the friendly neighbouring countries. Ronen Sen,

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<sup>15</sup> Interview with External Affairs Minister, Natwar Singh to Outlook, Jan 24, 2005.

India's Ambassador to Washington said:

Our job was not to compete with anyone or make political points at a critical time, but to mount search-and-rescue operations. Our first and foremost thought, our immediate motivation was to rescue people. When someone is sinking in water, you rush to help, you think later.<sup>16</sup>

However, concern for image can not be ignored all together though it was not the prime reason at the time of decision taken. As a claimer for permanent membership in the Security Council, India could not afford to project itself as a helpless victim. "India has been trying to convey the image that it is a regional power, and a credible power in terms of having the ability to step in when required."<sup>17</sup>

It can be summed up from the aforesaid discussions that India provided naval assistance to Sri Lanka and Maldives for two broad reasons, viz.

- Moral Responsibility
- Power projection.

#### **4.4.1 Moral Responsibility**

India is aware of its size, capacity and expertise. India is the largest country in the region. It has got enormous man power and other resources. India is the richest country in the South Asian region. It has got quite potential and efficient navy. Given its geographical location, it is the only country which could send its troops to Sri Lanka and the Maldives within hours. Moreover to help its smaller neighbours at the hours of needs has always been the priority of India's foreign policy. One of the priorities of UPA government's foreign policy is to accord attention to the small island countries in India's bid to forge new partnerships of mutual advantage, thereby contributing towards the process of socio-economic development and building world peace. Sri Lanka and Maldives are not only small countries but they are also friends of India. Due to all these factors India felt it was its moral responsibility to provide humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka and Maldives.

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.mea.gov.in>.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/2005/01/03/int10.htm>.



#### **4.4.2 Power Projection**

India never explicitly mentioned anywhere that its rescue and relief operations in Sri Lanka and Maldives were aimed at power projection. But if we see between the lines of statements and comments made by the government officials, it can very well be made out that India wanted to project its power through the humanitarian assistance in the neighbouring countries. For example, then External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh said: "...given our place in this region, and **our resources and expertise** in providing relief after natural disasters, it was natural that we should try and help these friendly countries in this hour of need." (Emphasis added).<sup>18</sup> Foreign secretary Shyam Saran on the other hand said "not only have we had the confidence that we can take care of the disaster that struck our own shores, we have also been confident of assisting others affected."<sup>19</sup> There was a time when India was dependent on foreign aid. But with the growth of economy India has now become quite confident. This confidence led to a shift in India's foreign policy too. No longer is India a security seeker, now it has assumed the role of security provider. Even though India is not a traditional donor country, nearly 1,300 crores rupees were spent in providing overseas development aid to friendly countries.<sup>20</sup> India's assistance to Sri Lanka and the Maldives must be seen in the line of this policy too.

After the 2004 tsunami tragedy, India conducted the relief operation entirely on its own and refused to take any help from outside, saying it had resources to deal with the crisis. India felt that foreign government's aids should be directed to the countries in greater need. Foreign secretary Shyam Saran said "the rationale behind India's refusal to accept aid was that whatever international effort was being launched, of which India itself is a part, should be directed towards those affected countries unable to manage the crisis".<sup>21</sup> India has a full-fledged National Institute of Disaster Management which had been put to effective use during the crisis. Moreover, government felt that the flood of foreign agencies and their material will only complicate the initial phase of disaster

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<sup>18</sup> Interview with External Affairs Minister, Natwar Singh to Outlook, Jan 24, 2005.

<sup>19</sup> Shobori Ganguli, "India's 'Tsunami Diplomacy' stuns the world", <http://headlines.sify.com/news/fullstory.php>.

<sup>20</sup> India, Ministry of External Affairs, *Annual Report, 2004-2005*, p.i.

<sup>21</sup> Ganguli, n.18.

management focusing on rescue and relief.<sup>22</sup> There is another important aspect of why it is better to not depend on foreign aid. Disasters such as this have highly localized effects and require localized responses. It is common sense that the local administration, with the help of national disaster relief institutions, are in a better position to know what is required by the people than an international agency or an outside country that has its own generalized idea of how to provide relief. The fact is that international aid would have introduced an unnecessary layer and its corresponding problems of black marketers and wrangling between foreign aid organizations. If India required help, it would have asked for it (as in the past). But this time, it doesn't. Thus, the polite refusal.<sup>23</sup>

D.H. Pai Panandikar, an economist with the R.P. Goenka Foundation said that India's expanding economy has given it the confidence to stand on its own. India no longer depends upon massive foreign aid. It phased out foreign aid from all but six major donors. It also became a creditor nation to the International Monetary Fund. Now India depends more on trade and foreign direct investment. In his words:

At home, the cost of rebuilding areas of Tamil Nadu state and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands from the tsunami may run into billions of dollars - but the government is confident it can meet the cost. Officials point out that private donations have already swelled the government's disaster relief funds by 80 million dollars. And India will seek funds from global financial institutions for longer-term rehabilitation...Some years back India was looked upon as a country which depended too much on aid not only for disasters but for economic development. But now that aid mentality is totally abandoned and India depends more on trade and foreign direct investment.<sup>24</sup>

India's ambassador to France, Dilip Lahiri said the country was strong enough to look after its own... (f)or the moment, he added, not only was India facing up to the crisis but also helping its neighbours, Sri Lanka and the Maldives.<sup>25</sup>

In short it can be said that by refusing the foreign aid and providing humanitarian assistance to its neighbours, India actually tried to send a clear message to the world that India had the potential to address its own crisis and not just a helpless victim.

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<sup>22</sup> C. Raja Mohan, "Delhi Durbar: No to Aid- Pompous or Pragmatic?", Daily Times, 10 January 2006.

<sup>23</sup> The Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 6 January 2005.

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.globalsecurity.org>.

<sup>25</sup> The Hindu (Chennai), 4 January 2005.

However, the decision to turn down foreign aid met with some criticism too. Many people felt that India should have ensured its citizens the best deal in the crisis by accepting the foreign aid. There were also concerns that an often inept bureaucracy may not deliver aid in the most effective manner to the tens of thousands of affected people, many of whom are on remote islands.<sup>26</sup> It is worth to mention here that the Indian government had rejected foreign aid only for the relief operation, but accepted international aid for reconstruction. In Raja Mohan's words, "India is selective in taking aid, not rejecting it."<sup>27</sup> The French Defence Minister, Michelle Alliot-Marie, attributed criticism of India's decision to refuse international aid to "a lack of knowledge about India and the country's economic, technological and financial capabilities." She said that India's decision was a gesture of solidarity towards countries that needed it most.<sup>28</sup> India's decision not to accept international aid was initially criticised as "false or misplaced pride," is now being grudgingly saluted by the press and the international community.

#### **4.5 Impact on India**

India's quick response in providing relief assistance to Sri Lanka and the Maldives, following the tragic 26 December 2004 Tsunami devastation has been widely recognised. The tsunami relief operation in the neighbouring countries brought India the prestige and honour. The immediate relief operation showed India's capacity and readiness to meet such a devastating crisis. More over, India's regional potential for leadership in the region has been recognised. The Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka during a press conference at New Delhi during February 2005 stressed that the Indian Navy was "a first grade force" that put India in the forefront of modern naval powers.<sup>29</sup> "As a big country with substantive infrastructural, manpower and military resources, besides wide experience of handling natural calamities, India has a direct, hands-on role in the region."<sup>30</sup> According to Brahma Chellaney, it raises India's international and diplomatic profile. According to him "India has been in recent years playing an expanded role and the fact that now in

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<sup>26</sup> <http://www.globalsecurity.org>.

<sup>27</sup> Raja Mohan, no.21.

<sup>28</sup> The Hindu, 6 January 2005.

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.mea.gov.in>.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.dailypioneer.com>.

response to the tsunami, India reached out quickly to neighboring states that were hit by the tsunami only reinforces India's larger regional role." Chandan Mitra, a columnist went to the extent of saying India as a major power on its own right. In his words: "by steadfastly refusing to be bullied by imperious Western powers into accepting aid for its tsunami victims and, instead, dispatching assistance to neighbours, India firmly marked its arrival on the world stage as a power to be reckoned with."<sup>31</sup>

India's role in the relief operation has been internationally noticed. Describing India as a "great and powerful nation," Mrs. Alliot-Marie said the French President, Jacques Chirac, was "ready to undertake joint action with India aimed at other countries."<sup>32</sup> The French right wing daily *Le Figaro* in its Monday edition wrote: "Overall, India has managed the crisis well. ... Better, India has used the catastrophe to affirm its status as a regional superpower. Candidate for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, India has proved that it is not dependant on international aid, which India has refused, politely but firmly. Better still, India will, on January 6 in Jakarta, sit at the donors' table in the company of the USA, Japan and Australia."<sup>33</sup>

India's role in the humanitarian assistance in the aftermath of tsunami was praised by International media too. *Business week* says: In its newly wealthy people's will to help tsunami-devastated areas, an increasingly confident and self-sufficient country is being born. This is a seminal moment for India, a turning point in the country's history. Its power - geopolitical, economic, and social - has clearly emerged.<sup>34</sup> *Bloomberg* says: "With being a regional power comes responsibilities to respond to these kinds of crisis. India is accepting that responsibility." *Korea Herald* says – "New Delhi is seeking to project the image of a self-reliant major player in the Indian Ocean region, which can help shape the region's security and economic affairs."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> *The Hindu*, 6 January 2005.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.mea.gov.in>

<sup>34</sup> "India Pulls Together Amidst Disaster", *Business Week* (New York), 11 January 2005.

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.mea.gov.in>

India has displayed a maturity in its management of the ravages caused by the tsunami – helping other countries in the region and in helping itself – leading to a changed perception of the country in the eyes of the international community.<sup>36</sup> Recognising the key role that India can play in the region, it was invited to be a part of the Tsunami Core Group put together by the United States in order to facilitate a coordinated effort to deal with this disaster. When it was announced, there was the United States, Japan, India and Australia. Later on, it was expanded to include the United Nations, Canada as well as the European Union. The fact that India was invited to be a part of this Core Group was precisely because of the recognition that India had the capabilities, the resources, and the necessary ability to help out with the relief efforts.<sup>37</sup> India has joined Australia, Japan, and the U.S. in setting up and monitoring a tsunami early-warning system in the Indian Ocean.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

India's diplomatic ambition has been fulfilled by the tsunami relief operation conducted by the navy. India could project itself as the regional leader and a compassionate soft power which is fully capable of maintaining its arc of influence in the South Asian region. After tsunami India's regional power status has received greater acceptability, and at the same time, navy's frontline presence in this humanitarian assistance got full recognition. However, as far as Indian Navy's capability is concerned, it needs to modernise its capability further.

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<sup>36</sup> Bridging the Ocean: India leads relief measures in tsunami hit areas, <http://www.mea.gov.in>.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

## *Conclusion*

## CONCLUSION

In the cold war period, the threat to the South Asian region emanated at three levels- internal, inter- state, and extra regional. Internal or intra state threat came from the militant assertions of the aspirations and desires of the ethnic or minority groups whose legitimate interests have been dominated by the dominant class of the society. Due to the plural nature of the society almost all the South Asian states are threatened by ethnic conflicts. The internal troubles not only threatened the government and population directly but also led to inter state problems. Several internal relations have spilled over national boundaries or have been made into bilateral quarrels by real or imagined cross-border intervention. At the interstate level countries have problems with each other due to several unsettled issues, such as boundary issues, refugee issues etc. Given the geographical proximity and cultural link with all the states, greater tensions were mainly between India and other states. Maldives is the only country with which India does not have any problems. Other than Maldives, and Bhutan to certain extent all the South Asian countries perceive India as a great threat. In the extra regional level threat was perceived from the presence of extra regional power in the region. Though all the South Asian countries were concerned about the presence of extra regional powers and in various occasions and on various forum opposed the presence of extra regional powers in the region, yet implicitly they saw the outsiders as a balance against India. Due to this kind of balancing attitude of the small powers of the region India always wanted to keep the extra regional powers out of the region so that it could maintain its sphere of influence.

However, with the increasing super power naval presence in the Indian Ocean Region, India's security interest got threatened. The super powers particularly the United States set up various naval bases in the Indian Ocean Region. These naval bases particularly US naval base at Diego-Garcia made India worried about its security as geographically it is very near to India. For the first time India perceived security threat from the sea. This development in the Indian Ocean led India to look at its navy which had so far been the most neglected branch of Indian armed forces. Accordingly Indian navy was employed to patrol in the Indian Ocean. In fact in the context of super power

naval rivalry in the region, for the first time Indian Navy was used for political or diplomatic purpose.

Given the internal conflict in the region and the inability of the small states to suppress those conflicts, India became all the more worried about the intention of the super power or the extra regional powers. There was every possibility of military intervention by the outsiders into a local trouble spot and thus bargain for bases in the region; in such case there would not be much opposition by the small powers as they would prefer to involve extra regional power to balance India. Given the Geographical and strategic importance, the most vulnerable states in this regard would be the two littoral states of the region, viz. Sri Lanka and Maldives. Calculating all these possibilities India decided to maintain its sphere of influence in these two countries. India had to show its good will as well as its power capability to get the faith from these small powers. India realized that mere rhetoric is not enough to safeguard its interest. It has to use some coercion and military might without involving itself with any hostility. India needs to project its capability to influence the smaller neighbours without giving the impression that it is trying to intervene militarily. Moreover India also has to project in the world that it has the capacity to be a global player. These considerations led India to provide its naval support to Sri Lanka and Maldives when these two countries were facing severe challenge in 1971, 1987 and 1988 respectively.

Political function of navy is carried out by naval presence in the area where a country has certain interest. India has got definite geo political interests in Sri Lanka and Maldives. Due to the historic, business, ethnic and cultural links the Tamils in Tamil Nadu were provoked by the atrocities against the Tamils in Sri Lanka and pressurized the Indian government to get involved in the Sri Lankan affairs and put pressure on the Sri Lankan government for an urgent solution to the ethnic conflict. Moreover, a large number of refugees poured into India which added extra burden on India. Thus for India's own security too it is very important to maintain stability in Sri Lanka. Hence though India did not want to intervene in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka, due to the spill over effects of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, India was compelled to involve in the Sri



Lankan problems. India's another concern was the involvement of extra regional powers. On the other hand India's interest on Maldives lies on its strategic location in the Indian Ocean. Maldives northern most tip is nearly 300 miles away from the Southern coastline of India. Its strategically significant Gan Island is just 240 miles off Diego- Garcia where the US has a naval and air base. This island was in British possession for years but in 1960s it decided to withdraw its bases from the island. With the British withdrawal from the Gan Island other powers particularly the US and the former USSR tried to set up base on the island. Though India did not have any intention to possess the island, yet keeping it free from the super power had been the prime concern for India especially during the cold war period. In short it can be said that India's naval assistance to these two countries were guided by geo-political, geo- strategic and security interest of India as well as the principle of moral concern towards the smaller neighbours.

In 1971, during the JVP insurrection, Indian Navy could evoke the desired result without using any force. As discussed in the first chapter, the presence of naval warships in many cases have made it possible to achieve political ends without resorting to armed struggle, merely by putting on pressure with one's own potential might and threatening to start military operations. In Turner's words it is called preventive deployment as it could prevent the problem from becoming a crisis. In other words it was an act of deterrence. In 1971 India's naval deployment in Sri Lanka can be termed as preventive deployment as it deterred the insurgents to further generate any crisis and affect the stability of the country. Presence of naval warship in the Sri Lankan shore was enough to send the message that India would not tolerate any act of violence to affect the stability and security of a democratically elected regime like Sri Lanka and would not hesitate to take punitive action against such violent act. Similarly during coup attempt in Maldives, the Indian navy responded actively and deterred the mercenaries from overthrowing a legitimately elected government. On both the occasions the navy's main purpose was to exert influence on these two countries as well as on the world. The naval assistance also demonstrated India's willingness and capability to protect its neighbours.

Contrary to these aforesaid cases, the naval assistance in Sri Lanka in 1987 can be termed as “Compellence”. “Compellence” is more specific, active and was intended to oblige the other country to do something, or may be to stop doing something. In 1987 India compelled Sri Lanka to free Trincomalee or other Sri Lankan port from military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India’s interest. A coercive method or gunboat diplomacy was used in this particular case. India’s main intention in this case was more of exercising power than exercise of influence. It can be said that in Sri Lanka in the 1980s, India’s diplomacy could ensure the country’s territorial integrity and managed to free Trincomalee or other Sri Lankan port from military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India’s interest. However, it failed to disarm the LTTE, and pursued the Sri Lankan government to implement the devolution package. Furthermore India had to lose the life of number of dedicated soldiers and also the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and earned hatred from both Tamil and Sinhala communities of Sri Lanka. Indian media described it as failure of diplomacy. In this context it would be appropriate to mention that success of naval diplomacy depends upon the perception of others and how others view it. The naval diplomacy’s intended result is not always controlled. Since successful naval diplomacy depends on the perception of others, it becomes, at times difficult to control their perceptions. It may also turn out that that the victim state may not have perceived a signal in the perspective in which an aggressive state wants it to be visualized. Moreover, naval influence on politics does not work in isolation. A Country’s overall foreign policy towards the other country also plays a decisive role in this direction.<sup>1</sup> A successful naval diplomacy depends not only on the ships at sea, but also on the skill of the country’s diplomats. This argument is apt to analyse India’s naval assistance to Sri Lanka in 1980s. Though, India provided its assistance or involved itself with Sri Lankan problems to resolve it in a manner so that both the parties of the conflict can get equal justice, India’s intention was misperceived and misunderstood by both the LTTE and Sinhala leaders. A prolonged naval presence at times may create negative attitude and seen as a threat. Sri Lanka always perceived India as a threat which is actually an imaginary threat. Sri Lanka felt that Indo-Sri Lanka Accord was imposed on them by

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<sup>1</sup> B.M. Dimri, “Naval Diplomacy and UNCLOS III”, *Strategic Analysis* (New Delhi), vol.17, no.1, April 1994, pp.65.

India and by signing it Sri Lanka has compromised with its independent foreign policy. Premadasa's anti India attitude was also a factor for the failure of the IPKF mission. Premadasa was against IPKF deployment from the beginning and refused to support the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement of 1987. He even stated in his election manifesto that foreign troops would be sent away if he was elected President.<sup>2</sup> Similarly the IPKF was inducted during Rajiv Gandhi's regime and was deinducted during V.P. Singh's regime. Janta Dal, viewed the induction of the IPKF as an unwise decision. V. P. Singh's personal opinion regarding induction of the IPKF was: "it was not well thought out decision in terms that there were no adequate preparations regarding collection of ground information, logistical needs, ability of the opponent, the necessary resources which India could command, all these strategic considerations were not gone into in detail and finally we ended up in confronting the Tamil population as well as the Sri Lankan Government. The objectives failed, not only in achieving the objectives and also in results, that is to say, diplomatic objective or military results".<sup>3</sup> When the head of both the countries were against the induction of IPKF, it did not have any other option but to withdraw.

However, the overall performance of Indian Navy's political role in Sri Lanka and the Maldives during the cold war period was not at all unsuccessful. India's major concerns in the region - restoring democracy, maintaining peace and stability, keeping extra regional power out of the region, keeping India's sphere of influence intact, assertion of leadership role in the region etc - were achieved by the Indian Navy. Capability of Indian Navy was recognized by the world community. India could exercise its power and influence in the region. Its regional leadership was realized by the super powers and appreciated India's support and assistance to the small powers in the region.

In the post cold war period Indian Navy performed its major political role in the region by providing humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka and Maldives in the aftermath of tsunami 2004. India's naval assistance during tsunami relief must be analysed in the perspective of India's regional security policy in the post cold war period. Though India

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<sup>2</sup> "Interim Report of the Jain Commission of Inquiry into the Assassination of Rajiv Gandhi", <http://www.india-today.com/jain/vol8/chap38.html>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

still maintains its independent foreign policy, yet some shifts in India's neighbourhood policy is visible in the post cold war period. In the post cold war period a new world order has emerged. In this new world order we have a unipolar situation with strong current and considerable activity in the direction of making the world multipolar. The new world has become a globalised world. To cope with the new world order India has made a move from some of its earlier policies. India no longer follows the policy of isolation. It now tries to cooperate with other powers too. Economically India has become more confident and has assumed the role of a donor country. Few years back India was dependent on foreign aid, but now India provides aid to other countries. This new role has given India confidence to assume a leadership role not only in the region but also in the world. India is also seeking a permanent membership in the Security Council. In other words India has assumed the role of security provider from security seeker. Now India is in a better position to claim the leadership role in the region. This is evident from India's naval assistance to Sri Lanka and the Maldives in the aftermath of tsunami 2004. India could project itself as the regional leader and a compassionate soft power which is fully capable of maintaining its arc of influence in the South Asian region. After tsunami India's regional power status has received greater acceptability and at the same time navy's frontline presence in this humanitarian assistance got full recognition. Involving India with the US - led core group for disaster relief along with Japan and Australia itself proves that India's capability has been recognized by the world community.

However, to make its presence felt in the world, India needs to modernise its capability further. Though, in the aftermath of the December 2004 Tsunami disaster Indian Navy's relief operations were commendable by all standards, particularly its rapid response and innovative use of survey vessels as hospital ships, it has also exposed a serious void in terms of the capacity for integral sealift and airlift. India must acquire LPD like the Trenton whose carrying capacity is roughly double that of the LST-L and it has a greater endurance of 7,700 nautical miles at a speed of 20 knots, as opposed to the LST-L's 3,300 nm at 14 knots.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> G.S. Khurana, "Indian Navy's Amphibious Leap: A Little Help from America", <http://www.india-defence.com/reports/1703>.

Another important concern is that though Indian Navy has the capability to undertake a political role and has been playing important political role, India does not have any official document or doctrine which guides the navy's political role. The need for such a policy document is underlined by the Indian Navy's growing international engagement.

## *Appendices*

## APPENDIX: 1

### Resource Allocation (Revenue and Capital) to the Army, Navy, Air force During 1950-51 to 1964-65

#### 1. Revenue

Year	Army	Air Force	Navy	Others	Total
1950-51	132	10	7	15	164
1951-52	135	15	7	14	171
1952-53	142	14	8	15	179
1953-54	134	28	10	15	187
1954-55	133	28	11	15	187
1955-56	118	28	12	14	172
1956-57	129	37	12	14	192
1957-58	159	70	14	14	257
1958-59	155	82	16	14	267
1959-60	142	59	14	15	230
1960-61	164	52	17	15	248
1961-62	204	59	19	19	301
1962-63	314	74	19	18	425
1963-64	532	134	21	17	704
1964-65	524	126	23	20	693

**Resource Allocation (Revenue and Capital) to the Army, Navy, Air force  
During 1950-51 to 1964-65**

**2. Capital**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Army</b>	<b>Air Force</b>	<b>Navy</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
1950-51	6	4	1	-7	4
1951-52	10	1	1	-2	10
1952-53	6	2	2	-4	6
1953-54	7	2	2	0	11
1954-55	5	2	4	-3	8
1955-56	9	3	7	-1	18
1956-57	6	4	8	2	20
1957-58	6	4	13	-1	22
1958-59	8	82	15	14	28
1959-60	9	59	19	15	35
1960-61	10	52	15	15	33
1961-62	13	59	6	19	25
1962-63	27	74	5	18	49
1963-64	68	134	6	17	111
1964-65	76	126	5	20	113

Source: Satyindra Singh, *Blueprint to Blue Water: The Indian Navy, 1951-65*  
(New Delhi: Lancer International, 1992), p.306.



## APPENDIX: 2

### Overview of the Growth of Indian Navy during 1947-90

Acquisition	Standard Displacement (Tons)	Name	Vintage Ordered	Year Ordered	Year Delivered	Supplier
Light Cruiser	7000	Delhi	WW2	1947	1948	Britain
Light Destroyers	1700	Rajput, Ranjit, Rana.	WW2	1948	1949	Britain
Landing Ship Tank	2200	Magar	WW2	1949	1949	Britain
Escort Destroyers	1000	Godavari, Gomati, Ganga	WW2	1951	1953	Britain
Light Tanker	3500	Shakti	WW2	1952	1953	Italy
Inshore Mine-sweepers	120	Bassein, Bimli-Patam	New	1952	1954	Britain
Coastal Mine-sweepers	360	Karwar, Canna-Nore, Cudda-Lore, Kakinada	New	1952	1956	Britain
Light Cruiser	8700	Mysore	WW2	1954	1957	Britain
Anti Aircraft Frigates	2250	Brahmaputra, Beas, Betwa.	New	1955	1958 1958 1960	Britain
Anti Submarine Figates	2150	Trishul, Talwar	New	1955	1959 1958	Britain
	1200	Khukri, Kirpan, Kuthar	New	1955	1958 1959 1959	Britain

Acquisition	Standard Displacement (Tons)	Name	Vintage Ordered	Year Ordered	Year Delivered	Supplier
Seaward Defence Boats MK II	210	T 51, T52, T53, T 54, T55	New	1972 1972 1972 1980 1980	1978 1977 1978 1982 1983	GRSE
Guided Missile Destroyers	4890	Rajput Rana Ranjit	New	1975	1980 1982 1983	Russia
Landing Craft Utility MK I	560	L31 L32	New	1974	1978 1981	HDL
Landing Craft Utility MK II	560	L33 L34 L35	New	1975	1980 1983 1983	GSL
Improved Leander Class Frigates	3040	Taragiri Vindhyagiri	New	1970	1980 1981	MDL
Survey Ships	1930	Sandhayak Nirdeshak Nirupak Investigator	New	1973 1976 1976 1986	1981 1983 1985 1990	GRSE
Torpedo Recovery Vessels	160	TRV A 71 TRV A 72	New	1978	1982 1983	GSL
Ocean Going Tug	1630	Matanga	New	1973	1983	GRSE
Inshore Minesweepers	100	Malvan Mangrol Mahe Mulki Magdala Malpe	New	1981	1983 1983 1983 1984 1984	Russia
Godavari Class Frigates	3610	Godavari Ganga Gomati	New	1978	1983 1985 1988	MDL
Survey Craft (SDB Hulls)	200	Makar Mithun Meen Mesh	New	1979	1984 1984 1984 1984	GSL

Acquisition	Standard Displacement (Tons)	Name	Vintage Ordered	Year Ordered	Year Delivered	Supplier
Seaward Defence Boats MK II	210	T 56 T 57 T 58 T59 T 60 T 61	New	1980	1984 1985 1985 1985 1985 1986	GRSE GSL GRSE GSL GRSE GSL
Torpedo Trials Vessel	160	Astravahini	New	1980	1984	HSL
Landing Ship Tank (Medium)	1410	Cheetah Mahish Guldar Kumbhir	New	1982	1984 1985 1985 1986	Poland
Submarines (SSK)	1655	Shishukumar, Shankush	New	1981	1986 1986	Germany
Cadet Training Ship	2650	Tir	New	1982	1986	MDL
Submarines (EKM)	2890	Sindhughosh Sindhudhvaj Sindhuraj Sindhuvir Sindhuratna Sindhukesari Sindhukriti Sindhuvijay	New	1983 1987 1988	1986 1987 1987 1988 1988 1988 1989 1990	Russia
Coastal Minesweepers	880	Karwar Kakinada Cuddalore Cannanore Konkan Kozhikode	New	1983	1986 1986 1987 1987 1988 1988	Russia

Acquisition	Standard Displacement (Tons)	Name	Vintage Ordered	Year Ordered	Year Delivered	Supplier
Landing Craft Utility MK III	560	L 36 L37 L38 L39	New	1982	1986 1986 1986 1987	GSL
Guided Missile Destroyers	5055	Ranvir Ranvijay	New	1981	1986 1987	Russia
Landing Ship Tank (Large)	5655	Magar	New	1981	1987	GRSE
Aircraft Carrier	28,500	Viraat	Second hand	1985	1987	Britain
Fast Missile Attack Craft	500	Veer Nirbhik Nipat Nishank Nirghat	New	1984	1987 1987 1988 1989 1989	Russia
Diving Support Vessel	2160	Nireekshak	Second hand	-	1988	MDL
Offshore patrol Vessels	1890	Sukanya Suvarna Subhadra Savitri Sarayu Sarada Sujata	New	1987	1989 1990 1990 1990 1991 1992 1993	Korea Korea Korea HSL HSL HSL HSL
Anti Submarine Patrol Vessels	485	Abhay Ajay Ajshay Agray	New	1986	1989 1990 1990 1991	Russia
Missile Armed Corvettes (Project 25)	1350	Khukri Kuthar Kirpan Khanjar	New	1986 1987	1989 1990 1990 1991	MDL MDL GRSE GRSE

Source: G M Hiranandani, *Transition to Triumph- Indian Navy 1965-1975* (New Delhi), p.11 & GM Hiranandani, *Transition to Eminance: The Indian Navy 1976- 90* (New Delhi), pp.30-33.

### **APPENDIX: 3**

#### **Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Sri Lanka to Establish Peace and Normalcy in Sri Lanka, Colombo, July 29, 1987**

**The Prime Minister of the Republic of India**, His Excellency Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and **the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka**, His Excellency Mr. J.R. Jayewardene having met at Colombo on July 29, 1987;

**Attaching** utmost importance to nurturing, intensifying and strengthening the traditional friendship of India and Sri Lanka and

**acknowledging** the imperative need of resolving the ethnic problem of Sri Lanka, and the consequent violence, and for the safety, well-being and prosperity of people belonging to all communities in Sri Lanka.

**Having** this day entered into the following Agreement to fulfil this objective;

1.1 **desiring** to preserve the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka;

1.2 **acknowledging** that Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic and a multi-lingual plural society consisting *inter alia*, of Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims (Moors), and Burghers;

1.3 **recognising** that each ethnic group has a distinct cultural and linguistic identity which has to be carefully nurtured;

1.4 **also recognizing** that the Northern and the Eastern Provinces have been areas of historical habitation of Sri Lankan Tamil speaking people, together in this territory with other ethnic groups;

1.5 **Conscious** of the necessity of strengthening the forces contributing to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka, and preserving its character as a multi-ethnic, multi lingual and multi-religious plural society, in which all citizens can live in equality, safety and harmony, and prosper and fulfil their aspirations;

#### **2. Resolve that:**

2.1 Since the Government of Sri Lanka proposes to permit adjoining Provinces to join to form one administrative unit and also by a Referendum to separate as may be permitted to the Northern and Eastern Provinces as outlined below:

2.2 During the period, which shall be considered an interim period (*i.e.*) from the date of the elections to the Provincial Council, as specified in para 2.8 to the date of the referendum as specified in para 2.3, the Northern and Eastern Provinces as now constituted, will form one administrative unit, having one elected Provincial Council. Such a unit will have one Governor, one Chief Minister and one Board of Ministers.

2.3 There will be a referendum on or before 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1988 to enable the people of the Eastern Province to decide whether:

(A) The Eastern province should remain linked with the Northern province as one administrative unit, and continue to be governed together with the Northern Province as specified in para 2.2, or

(B) The Eastern province should constitute a separate administrative unit having its own distinct Provincial Council with a separate Governor, Chief Minister and Board of Ministers.

The President may, at his discretion decide to postpone such a referendum.

2.4 All persons who have been displaced due to ethnic violence, or other reasons, will have right to vote in such a referendum. Necessary conditions to enable them to return to areas from where they were displaced will be created.

2.5 The referendum, when held, will be monitored by a committee headed by the Chief Justice, a member appointed by the President, nominated by the government of Sri Lanka, and a member appointed by the President, nominated by the representatives of the Tamil speaking people of the Eastern Province.

2.6 A simple majority will be sufficient to determine the result of the referendum.

2.7 Meeting and other forms of propaganda, permissible within the laws of the country, will be allowed before the referendum.

2.8 Elections to Provincial Councils will be held within the next three months, in any event before December 31, 1987. Indian observers will be invited for elections to the Provincial Council of the North and East.

2.9 The emergency will be lifted in the Eastern and Northern provinces by August 15, 1987. A cessation of hostilities will come into effect all over the island within 48 hours of the signing of this agreement. All arms presently held by militant groups will be surrendered in accordance with an agreed procedure to authorities to be designated by the Government of Sri Lanka. Consequent to the cessation of hostilities and the surrender of arms by militant groups, the army and other security personnel will be confined to barracks in camps as on May 25, 1987. The process of Surrendering of arms and the confining the security personnel moving back to barracks shall be completed within 72 hours of the cessation of hostilities coming into effect.

2.10 The Government of Sri Lanka will utilize for the purpose of law enforcement and maintenance of security in the Northern and Eastern provinces the same organizations and mechanisms of Government as are used in the rest of the country.

2.11 The President of Sri Lanka will grant a general amnesty to political and other prisoners now held in custody under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and other emergency laws, and to combatants, as well as to those persons accused, charged and or convicted under these laws. The Government of Sri Lanka will make special efforts to rehabilitate militant youth with a view to bringing them back to the mainstream of national life. India will cooperate in the process.

2.12 The Government of Sri Lanka will accept and abide by the above provisions and expect all others to do likewise.

2.13 If the framework for the resolutions is accepted, the government of Sri Lanka will implement the relevant proposals forthwith.

2.14 The Government of India will under-work and guarantee the resolutions, and cooperate in the implementation of these proposals.

2.15 These proposals are conditional to an acceptance of proposals negotiated from 4.5.1986 to 19.12.1986 Residual matters not finalized during the above negotiations shall be resolved between India and Sri Lanka within a period of six weeks of signing this agreement. These proposals are also conditional to the Government of India co-operating directly with the Government of Sri Lanka in their implementation.

2.16 These proposals are also conditional to the Government of India taking the following actions if any militant group operating in Sri Lanka do not accept this framework of proposals for a settlement, namely:

- (A) India will take all necessary steps to ensure that Indian territory is not used for activities prejudicial to the unity, integrity and security of Sri Lanka.
- (B) The Indian Navy Coast Guard will cooperate with the Sri Lanka Navy in preventing Tamil militant activities from affecting Sri Lanka.
- (C) In the event that the Government of Sri Lanka requests the Government of India to afford military assistance to implement these proposals the Government of India will cooperate by giving to the Government of Sri Lanka such military assistance as and when requested.
- (D) The Government of India will expedite repatriation from Sri Lanka of Indian Citizens to India who are resident there concurrently with the repatriation of Sri Lankan refugees from Tamil Nadu.

(E) The Governments of India and Sri Lanka, will cooperate in ensuring the physical security and safety of all communities inhabiting the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

2.17 The Government of Sri Lanka shall ensure free, full and fair participation of voters from all communities in the Northern and Eastern provinces in electoral processes envisaged in this agreement. The Government of India will extend full cooperation to the Government of Sri Lanka in this regard.

2.18 The official language of Sri Lanka shall be Sinhala. Tamil and English will also be official languages.

3. This agreement and the annexure there-to shall come into force upon signature.

**In witness whereof** we have set our hands and seals hereunto. Done in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on this the Twenty ninth day of July of the year one thousand nine hundred and eighty seven, in duplicate, both texts being equally authentic.

Rajiv Gandhi  
Prime Minister of the Republic of India

Junius Richard Jayewardene  
President of the  
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka



## **Annexure to the Agreement**

1. His Excellency the Prime Minister of India and His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka agree that the referendum mentioned in paragraph 2 and its sub-paragraphs of the Agreement will be observed by a representative of the Election Commission of India to be invited by His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka.

2. Similarly, both Heads of Government agree that the elections to the Provincial Council mentioned in paragraph 2.8 of the Agreement will be observed by a representative of the Government of India to be invited by the President of Sri Lanka.

3. His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka agrees that the Home Guards would be disbanded and all paramilitary personnel will be withdrawn from the Eastern and Northern Provinces with a view to creating conditions conducive to free elections to the Council.

The President, in his discretion, shall absorb such paramilitary forces, which came into being due to ethnic violence into the regular security forces of Sri Lanka.

4. The Prime Minister of India and the President of Sri Lanka agree that the Tamil militants shall surrender their arms to authorities agreed upon to be designated by the President of Sri Lanka. The surrender shall take place in the presence of one senior representative each of the Sri Lankan Red Cross and the Indian Red Cross.

5. The Prime Minister of India and the President of Sri Lanka agree that a joint Indo-Sri Lankan observers group consisting of qualified representatives of the Government of India and the Government of Sri Lanka would monitor the cessation of hostilities from 31 July, 1987.

6. The Prime Minister of India and the President of Sri Lanka agree that in terms of paragraph 2.14 and paragraph 2.16(c) of the Agreement, an Indian Peace Keeping contingent may be invited by the President of Sri Lanka to guarantee and enforce the cessation of hostilities, if so required.

## Letter of the Prime Minister of India

July 29, 1987

Excellency,

Conscious of the friendship between our two countries stretching over two millennia and more, and recognizing the importance of nurturing this traditional friendship, it is imperative that both Sri Lanka and India reaffirm the decision not to allow our respective territories to be used for activities prejudicial to each other's unity, territorial integrity and security.

In this spirit, you had during the course of discussions, agreed to meet some of India's concerns as follows:

- (i) Your Excellency and myself will reach an early understanding about the relevance and employment of foreign military and intelligence personnel with a view to ensuring that such presences will not prejudice Indo-Sri Lankan relations.
- (ii) Trincomalee or any other port in Sri Lanka will not be made available for military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India's interests.
- (iii) The work of restoring and operating the Trincomalee Oil Tank Farm will be undertaken as a joint venture between India and Sri Lanka.
- (iv) Sri Lanka's agreement with foreign broadcasting organizations will be reviewed to ensure that any facilities set up by them in Sri Lanka are used solely as public broadcasting facilities and not for any military or intelligence purposes.

In the same spirit India will:

- (i) Deport all Sri Lankan citizens who are found to be engaging in terrorist activities or advocating separatism or secessionism.
- (ii) Provide training facilities and military supplies for Sri Lankan security forces.

India and Sri Lanka have agreed to set up a joint consultative mechanism to continuously review matters of common concern in the light of the objectives stated in para 1 and specifically to monitor the implementation of other matters contained in this letter.

Kindly confirm, Excellency, that the above correctly sets out the agreement reached between us.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours Sincerely,  
(Rajiv Gandhi)

His Excellency  
Mr. J.R. Jayewardene,  
President of the Democratic  
Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Colombo

**President of Sri Lanka**

July 29, 1987

Excellency

Please refer to your letter dated the 29<sup>th</sup> July 1987, which reads as follows:

Excellency,

Conscious of the friendship between our two countries stretching over two millennia and more, and recognizing the importance of nurturing this traditional friendship, it is imperative that both Sri Lanka and India reaffirm the decision not to allow our respective territories to be used for activities prejudicial to each other's unity, territorial integrity and security.

2. In this spirit, you had, during the course of our discussions, agreed to meet some of India's concern as follows:
  - (i) Your Excellency and myself will reach an early understanding about the relevance and employment of foreign military and intelligence personnel with a view to ensuring that such presences will not prejudice Indo-Sri Lankan relations.
  - (ii) Trincomalee or any other port in Sri Lanka will not be made available for military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India's interests.
  - (iii) The work of restoring and operating the Trincomalee Oil Tank Farm will be undertaken as a joint venture between India and Sri Lanka.
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- (i) Deport all Sri Lankan citizens who are found to be engaging in terrorist activities or advocating separatism or secessionism.
  - (ii) Provide training facilities and military supplies for Sri Lankan security forces.
4. India and Sri Lanka have agreed to set up a joint consultative mechanism to continuously review matters of common concern in the light of the objectives stated in para 1 and specifically to monitor the implementation of other matters contained in this letter.
  5. Kindly confirm, Excellency, that the above correctly sets out the agreement reached between us.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.”

This is to confirm that the above correctly sets out the understanding reached between us.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

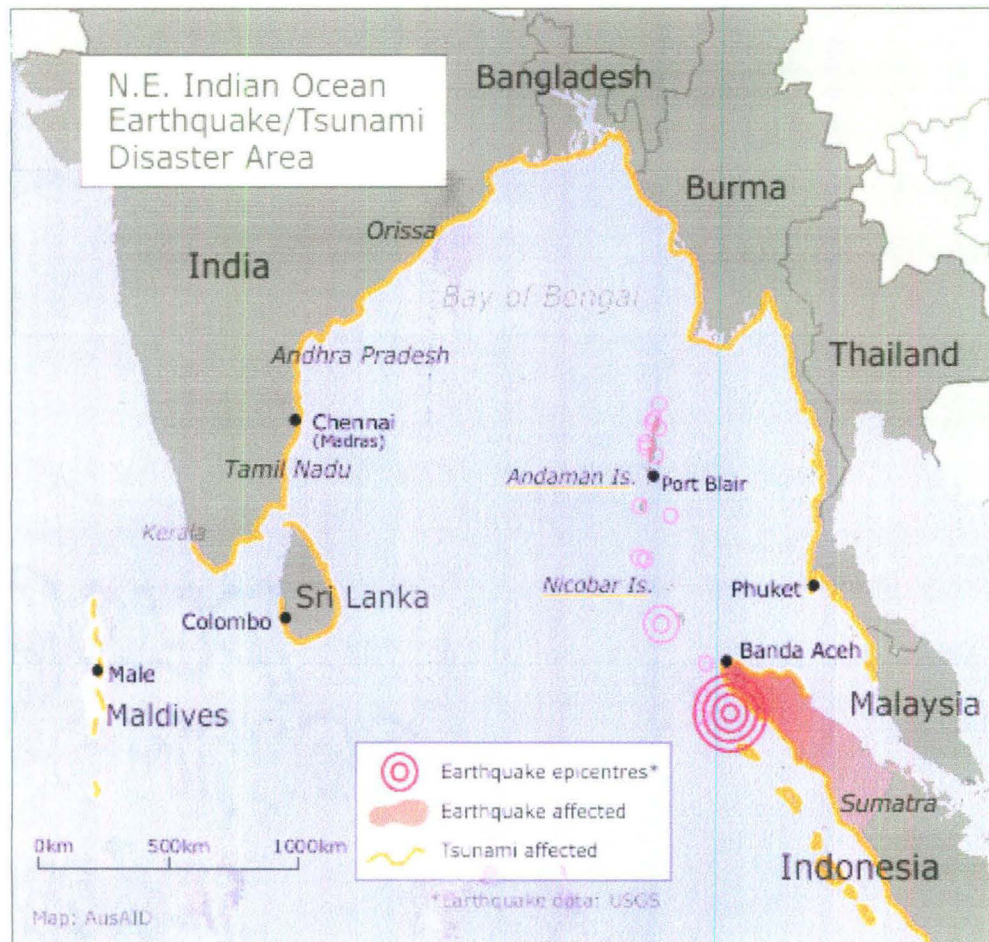
Sd/-  
(J.R. Jayewardene)  
President

His Excellency  
Mr. Rajiv Gandhi  
Prime Minister of the Republic of India, New Delhi.

Source: Avtar Singh Bhasin, *India-Sri Lanka Relations & Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict Documents 1947-2000*, vol. 4 (New Delhi: 2001), col.723, pp.1946-1951.

## APPENDIX: 4

### Map of the Tsunami Disaster Area of North Indian Ocean



Source: [www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/topic.cfm?Id=9562](http://www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/topic.cfm?Id=9562).

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